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Polys, colleges rebel against NAB exercise

by John O'Leary and Felicity Jones

The beginnings of a grass-roots rebellion by polytechnics and colleges is threatening to damage the National Advisory body's short-term planning exercise.

Up to a third of polytechnics and a number of colleges are likely to refuse NAB's request to prioritize academic areas in the event of cuts in excess of 10 per cent. Others are recommending their local authorities to argue the case against large cuts while reluctantly setting priorities.

Resistance to the setting of priorities is being led by branches of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, which has asked its 800 branches to persuade academic boards of the dangers involved in the exercise.

Although most institutions are still giving the final touches to their submissions and agreeing them with local authorities, a significant number of dissenters is now certain. They will be led by the Inner London Education Authority, which has already decided against setting priorities for its five polytechnics.

Both the North-East London Polytechnic and Oxford Polytechnic are to prioritize all academic programmes, effectively negating the exercise. Ealing College of Higher Education is another institution definitely not co-operating in this aspect of the exercise, while Middlesex and Manchester Polytechnics are likely to follow suit.

Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the NAB board, said this week that any refusal to set priorities would be regrettable and would make the exercise more crude, but it would not impede progress. "If we do not get the information from the institutions, we will have to do it ourselves, taking what advice we can, but it will not be as satisfactory," he said.

While the NAB secretariat has been threatening to boycott parts of the planning exercise, no assessment has yet been made of the numbers

involved. There was no question of changing details of the exercise now, he said, and lack of co-operation on this issue would not be a serious hindrance.

North-East London Polytechnic prioritized all its programmes except for initial teacher training, which was cut in the Department of Education's recent proposals for the reduction in places.

A covering letter will be sent explaining the reasons. A spokesman said that it had proved impossible to single out any programmes in the 'B' category, which involves itemising where additional resources would be channelled in the event of a less severe reduction in resources, because the form was not sufficiently detailed.

The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics has not agreed any policy of opposition to this part of the NAB exercise. It has been left up to individual institutions to decide how to react.

But according to a representative, many polytechnics were going to send accompanying letters with their response in which they will detail the positive aspects of their institution's future development.

Typical of the arguments against prioritization were those put to governors of Ealing College in a report by Mr Neil Morrill, the director and a member of the NAB board. "I believe that it is not only difficult but probably unwise to prioritize the college's work as NAB has proposed because if one subject were to be identified as of low priority the 'knock-on' effect on other subjects and courses could be considerable," he wrote.

"The exclusion of one or more programme areas would necessarily jeopardize the quality of other programmes taught in the college." While stressing that they wished to assist NAB in the planning exercise, the governors agreed not to identify particular programmes either for cuts of 10 per cent or for protection in the event of larger economies.



Expansion 1952-style

by David Walker

A new generation of higher technological institutions of university rank was proposed to the Cabinet in 1952 by Lord Woolton, Lord President of the Council in Sir Winston Churchill's post-war Government, according to the Cabinet papers for 1982 which were released this week under the 30-year rule.

Lord Woolton's plan was to expand Imperial College, London, and also to provide funds for the development of two equivalent regional centres in Glasgow and Manchester. The two beneficiaries were to be the Manchester College of Technology, now the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, and the Royal Technical College, now the University of Strathclyde.

In Cabinet, Lord Swinton, the Lord Privy Seal who had a particular interest in scientific applications for defence, and James Stuart, Secretary of State for Scotland, who ensured

that a Scottish college was favoured, supported the scheme.

Lord Woolton wrote in his memorandum: "I regard the ultimate object as nothing less than a technical revolution in British industry. To achieve this I consider that we have to mobilize the technically-minded young people in the industrial districts."

The Cabinet in 1952 turned for advice to the Treasury which was still responsible for the universities through the University Grants Committee. The UGC both agreed to the expansion of Imperial College and accepted the desirability of extra funding for the future UMIST and Strathclyde, although neither received UGC grants at that stage.

However Lord Woolton's scheme was not implemented in full. Instead Sir Anthony Eden's successor Government created the colleges of advanced technology following the 1956 White Paper on technical education.

Student cash: Treasury must still be convinced

by David Jobbins

Treasury ministers have yet to be convinced that a mixed loans and grants system of student support would save money.

But Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, is likely to put a number of options to his Cabinet colleagues in the next few weeks.

The exact shape of the package would depend on how much the Cabinet is prepared to devote to it. But even if it gives a political approval in principle for its inclusion in the next election manifesto, colossal administrative details of running a loans scheme in parallel with the existing awards system will remain undecided.

Ministers also face determined opposition from influential Conservative MPs before they could guarantee inclusion in the manifesto.

Among prominent Tories who have publicly expressed reservations are former Prime Minister Mr Edward Heath and Sir William van Straubenzee, a former junior education minister and current chairman of the Conservative Parliamentary education committee.

An earlier proposal to completely replace mandatory awards with a loans scheme founded after the Treasury objected to the short-term costs.

Variable factors not yet fixed within the Department of Education and Science include the repayment period, interest rate, and safeguards against defaulters. But a scheme administered through the clearing banks has not recently been discussed.

Although the official Department of Education line is that there is no firm package of proposals, Mr William Widdowson, under secretary for higher education, has accepted that it is inevitable that one will be produced and submitted for Cabinet approval.

He has fought to sugar the pill and include peripheral benefits, such as reducing the age at which students become financially independent from their parents and extending support to students on advanced courses who do not qualify for mandatory awards at present.

At the moment parental income is assessed until a student reaches 25 and this could be brought as low as 21. Courses which do not qualify for grants but are regarded as advanced include the bar and paramedical training.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour Party education spokesman, has already warned that a Labour government would dismantle any loans scheme introduced by the Conservatives.

Mr Neil Stewart, president of the National Union of Students, has challenged Sir Keith Joseph to confirm or deny that a scheme was on the point of approval.

Relations between ministers and this NUS have reached an all-time low with a flat refusal from Sir Keith to meet the union to discuss the Government's decision to hold next year's grants increase to 4 per cent.

Mr Stewart warned that the proposals would hit working class students particularly hard. The 150,000 students on the full award (currently £1595 outside London and £1900 in the capital) got no parental contribution and if the proposals were implemented their income would simply be cut in half. Mr Stewart said.

SSRC heads for new trouble

by Paul Flinther

The Social Science Research Council is heading for confrontation with its staff unions over plans to shed 30 jobs.

The four main unions involved were this week putting a strongly worded defence to the council's finance and general purposes committee, describing plans to cut costs as "short-sighted", hasty and ill-thought out.

They are particularly angry because cutting 30 posts at a saving of up to £250,000 will mean that a disproportionate share of the savings will come off the staff budget. Almost all posts affected are clerical.

In a joint submission they warn that after only six months "it is clear that the new committee structure is not functioning effectively".

The council is currently deciding how to save about 4 per cent over each of the next three years as demanded by Government ministers. Its budget has already fallen by more than 25 per cent since 1979.

A recommendation in Lord Rothschild's report to move the headquarters from central London is still under review, with Swindon and a

cheaper London site the options. Supervision of postgraduate awards, halved in total since 1979, is likely to be pooled with the research councils already based in Swindon.

This year central administration will account for 12 per cent of the £20.9m SSRC budget, and unfavourable comparison with other councils. For the Natural Environment Research Council the figure is 4.4 per cent, and for the Science and Engineering Council 2.7 per cent.

But the Association of Scientific, Technical, and Managerial Staffs and three civil service unions point out that the figures must be treated with great caution.

They call for alternative cuts in what appear as "expensive luxuries" such as first class travel for committee members and senior staff, foreign travel, and council members' honoraria and committee members' fees which could save £50,000.

Dr Cyril Smith, SSRC secretary, said that although the council had been employed on a series of one year contracts, she believed that the renewal of the contracts was a formality. The chairman of the French department, Dr Michael Scott said the contracts had been renewed only to

St Andrews wins contract victory

by Olga Wojtas

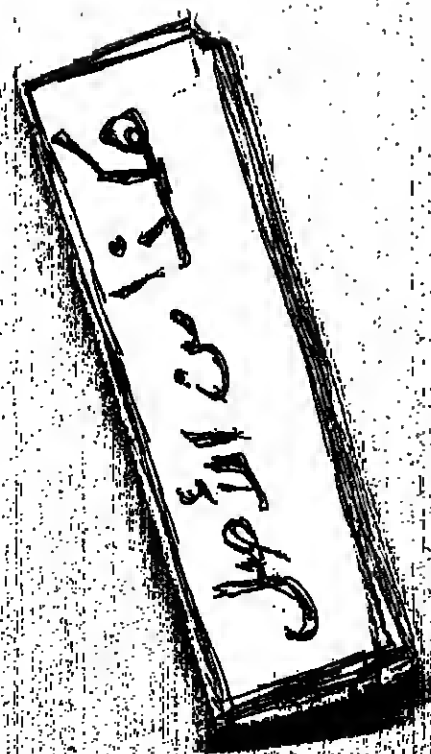
Scottish Correspondent

Proceedings which were seen as a test case for the rights of university staff on short-term contracts have ended in victory for St Andrews University.

An industrial tribunal has rejected a claim of unfair dismissal and unfair dismissal from a French lecturer who was replaced after working at St Andrews for seven and a half years.

Dr David Dorward, deputy secretary of St Andrews, who represented the university at the hearing, said: "We feel that the tribunal has made a right decision. If the judgment had gone the other way it would have been very difficult for the University of St Andrews or any other British university to make of making a short-term appointment."

Dr Francoise Blackburn told the tribunal that although she had been employed on a series of one year contracts, she believed that the renewal of the contracts was a formality. The chairman of the French department, Dr Michael Scott said the contracts had been renewed only to



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CND key issue as 'nice guys' compete for vice presidency

by David Jobbins



Bryon: left-wing support

Left-wingers are pinning their hopes on a middle-of-the-road candidate for the top elected job in the college lecturers' union. Just two candidates are to run for vice president of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education. In the past up to four have stood.

Mr Glyn Bryon, a deputy head of department at Oxford College of Further Education, is likely to be able to call on the support of left-wingers among the union's 74,000 members. It only because they will want to keep out his opponent, Mr Bill Hoard.

Mr Hoard, who lectures at Birmingham Polytechnic, helped lead the campaign for a special conference on affiliation to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

As soon as the special conference

rejected the ballot in favour of consultation within branches to permit informed debate at this year's conference, Mr Hoard announced publicly that he would stand.

He is expected to refer explicitly to the affiliation question and the change of role which permits NAFHE to follow political issues.

Mr Bryon, however, is understood to be following the line taken by the executive on the importance of attendance at branch meetings and stressing the significance of participation in the union's affairs.

Both men have been on the NAFHE executive, for some time. During last year's executive discussions on CND, Mr Hoard reserved his position while Mr Bryon supported the majority view at all stages. But he is not identified with sections of the union which have passionately espoused the cause and could well be

the sort of candidate to unite the left-of-centre and many moderates who are uncertain about the way the right has sought to turn CND into the dominant issue in the union's affairs.

Mr Hoard has on his side an electoral system which has produced a string of right-wing vice presidents despite the undoubted strengths of a series of left-wing candidates.

For the first year for some time there is no extreme left wing standing.

Mr Hoard and Mr Bryon are both highly regarded within the union, frequently described as "nice guys", and it is clear there has been a conscious effort to avoid running firebrand candidates who could worsen the delicate situation over affiliation. Voting will be completed by the end of next month.



Hoard: against CND affiliation

CNAAs upgrades engineers' degrees

by Felicity Jones

The Council for National Academic Awards has issued a policy statement on the development of two new degrees in engineering which will be welcomed in the public sector as a chance for polytechnics and colleges to catch up with the universities in this field.

The policy statement provides the framework for institutions to develop courses leading to a first-level honours Bachelor of Science (engineering) degree and a four-year Bachelor of Engineering degree. The council rejected recommendations for a new BSc award for technician engineers.

The council, which is responsible for granting awards to a third of all graduating engineers, agreed its policy in the light of the continuing debate in higher education on engineering which started with the Furman report in 1980 and led to the Engineering Council's recent statement.

Many of the recommendations are in line with those proposed at the national conference on engineering education and training and the CNAAs goes on record as stating that there is a need for a new system of more comprehensive courses "which recognizes that engineering is not merely science applied but a fundamentally separate activity with its own intellectual framework".

The CNAAs states that it believes

all engineering degree courses should deal with the application of engineering principles to the solution of practical problems based on engineering systems and processes, and an introduction to the fabrication and use of materials (commonly referred to as FA2 and FA1).

Other than general, simple guidelines, the council leaves it up to individual colleges to develop and test their courses. The only specific aim is that all such degree courses should meet the needs of industry both for the present and the foreseeable future.

The two engineering awards will involve an improved and extended first degree course which should last four years and lead to a BEng degree.

A MEing award was turned down because there was insufficient precedent for the CNAAs to pursue such a degree at this time. The other full-time courses leading to the new award of BSc(Eng) will not last less than three academic sessions and will be equal to the CNAAs's first-time and sandwich course proposals of less than 100 weeks are unlikely to be considered by the council for approval.

Since the policy statement was approved at the last council meeting, all colleges and polytechnics have been circulated with the document.

Hull 'grieved' at UGC sums

Hull University is harbouring a deep sense of grievance over the way the University Grants Committee calculated student numbers in science, Sir Roy Marshall, the vice-chancellor, told the annual meeting of the council.

The UGC has given Hull another 20 science-based students above the numbers allocated but the university is now asking for a further 80. Sir Roy claims that the UGC failed to take account of two main factors. Some science courses, particularly mathematics and management sciences, were not fully on stream at Hull during the UGC's base year 1979/80. The university also had a larger science entry in 1980 than in 1979 which increased again in 1981.

"When the UGC said it had protected our science numbers at their

1979 level, that was true," Sir Roy said. "What it failed to say was that it was asking us to cut our 1981 numbers by 20 per cent and since the size of the cuts were not made until July 1981, that is the only real figure to deal with."

Hull suffered a "grossly disproportionate share" of the cuts in general student numbers, according to the vice-chancellor. It was told to drop intake by 17 per cent compared with a national drop of five per cent at a time when applications were up by 24 per cent.

Hull was one of a group of universities which the UGC asked last month to explain why its admissions in 1982 appear to set it on course to overshoot the committee's targets.

What makes industry unpopular?

by Paul Flather

Engineering students are generally interested in pay and status, vote Conservative, and are least keen on helping others, while sociology students are less materialistic, are community orientated, but would not vote SDP, according to research just completed.

The research confirms a gulf between the social beliefs and political values of students opting for careers in manufacturing or engineering industry, and those reading sociology or history.

The work is based on interviews and questionnaires sent to 900 sixth-formers in 17 schools 800 first and final-year students in seven universities, as part of a £20,000 project supported by the Social Science Research Council.

Ms Helen Weinreich-Haste and Professor Stephen Cogswell of Bath University set out to investigate why fewer of the most able students and school-leavers choose to go into industry, and why relatively few women opt for engineering.

They confirm that social and political

beliefs play a large part in the career choice irrespective of ability. They tested this by asking students how they explained unemployment or the recession, how their self-image compared to their ideal image, what moral values they had and how they would vote.

This picture was confirmed among engineering students, most attracted by pay, status, working on one's own, supportive of economic growth, of decisions taken by experts, and rewards given according to ability. They were least interested in helping others.

Sociologists were more egalitarian in their outlook, saw rewards more in terms of need, and were more attracted to "radicalism".

Engineers are most likely to support the Conservative party, the Social Democrats were second in popularity, particularly among women, although much of the project was done in early 1982 when the SDP was doing well.

Labour got its lowest support among engineers, and was low

among all women students except sociologists. Forty-three per cent of male and 32 per cent of female sociologists would support the SDP, compared to about 10 per cent voting Tory, and 24 per cent of males and 37 per cent of females voting Labour.

Tory support is in a majority among all subject groups except history and sociology. More than half of engineers vote Tory, about 40 per cent of economists and modern linguists, and more than a third of physicists, biologists, and mathematicians, do so.

The project is one of some 360 supported by the SSRC last year. Current studies include public policy making and the Church of England, marital and family relations in 1980, the effects of unemployment, the effects of OPEC shocks, and retirement in Cornwall.

Research supported by the SSRC 1982, price £5,500 plus handling charge, from School Government Publishing Company, Darby House, Blatchingly Road, Merstham, Redhill BN1 3DN.

Birmingham criticized for poorer student results

by Patricia Santinelli

Birmingham University's student performance rates have been criticized in a report which advocates a more widespread and preventive role for university educational counselling services.

The unpublished report is based on a three-year independent research study into the university's educational counselling service. It attempted to discover how students got into educational difficulties, whether a central counselling service was necessary or whether problems could be dealt with more effectively within departments.

Writing in Birmingham University's *Teaching News*, Dr Robin Willis-Lee, of the educational counselling service, says: "Birmingham produces by and large less-qualified output as a proportion of its annual leavers than average figures for all universities in England and Wales."

"What is worse is that we produce poorer results with all the advantages of resources of a large university and at greater direct cost than any of the five universities with which we can reasonably be compared."

He points out that an analysis of leavers over the three years showed that Birmingham University lost no less than 786 students, 342 on the grounds of academic failure and 444 for other reasons.

In the last five years, a total of 1,275 students had been lost with the same proportion of academic and non-academic reasons. The performance of different faculties varied considerably.

In addition data collected on the university's tutorial system gave cause for concern. "It implies that our system is all too often unclear in conception and design, unreliable in operation and ineffective at the point of need," Dr Willis-Lee writes.

Dr Willis-Lee strongly endorses the work of the educational counselling service and refutes proposals to abolish it.

At the same time he recommends on the line of the report that existing departmental counselling and tutoring arrangements should be used wherever possible. This would encourage greater awareness of the causes of students' educational problems and of the ways in which these might be resolved, he says.

Check terms of contract, warns union

by Olga Wajns
Scottish Correspondent

The Association of University Teachers' top official in Scotland has warned academics to check the terms of prospective contracts.

Mr David Ilicman, regional official for Scotland and the North of England, said he believed there were cases where posts had been offered on a tenuous basis but applicants had been persuaded to accept a fixed-term contract during the interview.

"Applicants should look very carefully at the terms offered and be conscious about what is said to them at interview," he said. "I am personally prepared to be consulted and offer advice about the terms of appointments they are applying for."

The AUT's junior vice president, Dr Ron Emanuel, said the system of temporary contracts had worked in the 1960s, when there had been natural progression to permanent posts, but now academics were staying longer on temporary contracts.

Around 10,000 staff were on short-term contracts which waived rights of redundancy payments and claims for unfair dismissal, he warned. The AUT was concerned by attempts within universities to advertise posts as temporary in cases where they could not be justified.

"We have got to tackle this more centrally, not through individual universities, but through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals," he said.

Dr Ilicman, chairman of the Scottish AUT, condemned the Government's university entrance quota for undermining the long Scottish tradition of "the lad o' pairs" being able to go to university.

Well-qualified students were being turned away by these arbitrary figures, he said.

Boost in-service work, says OECD

by Patricia Santinelli

Western nations should give greater priority to in-service education and training according to report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The report is based on a six-year research programme carried out by the OECD's centre for educational research and innovation. It argues that only this sort of investment can help countries sustain educational change and standards.

Dr Roy Holm of the Bristol University school of education, the author of the report, says: "In spite of decreasing recruitment there remains a strong need to maintain the internal dynamism of the teaching profession as a means of improving the education system at all levels in member countries."

The programme was set up in response to growing demand for the coordinated development of in-service education and training to equip teachers with new approaches, methods and attitudes.

The report stresses that training activities should be centred on school, be more collaborative in their approach and have a solid support structure.

But Dr Holm points out that school-based INSET should not exclude other types of in-service education and training. "It is vitally important that existing methods and approaches, for example advance degree courses at universities, should be maintained," he said.

The report discusses the external support structure for INSET and states that if universities and colleges are to be used effectively as providing agencies then their internal structure and staff incentive schemes must be reviewed.

"If such institutions are to engage in part-time in-service then the way part-time students are valued and financed is of crucial importance," the report says. "Moreover if staff are to engage in school-focused INSET then the way in which consultancy activities are valued must also be reviewed."

The report adds that the extent to which such institutions specialize in conventional, more advanced courses will undoubtedly affect their answers to these questions.

"At present, for example, there are few incentives for college staff in the United States and the UK to adopt new imaginative approaches. They gain more career awards by sustaining and extending traditional courses," it claims.

The report does not shed much light on the thorny question of whom should pay for INSET, apart from saying that this is a matter for individual countries. Far more research should be carried out in this area, it adds.

But in identifying future work it does stress that one way forward would be to focus not just on INSET for teachers but on initial and in-service training, thus giving teacher education a continuing education perspective.

Shortlist for Space announced

Five new scientific missions have passed the first hurdle before adoption by the European Space Agency. The five proposals, chosen from 21 submitted to the ESA in November, will now be assessed in detail so that the best one or two can be chosen for inclusion in the agency's scientific programme in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The projects selected for further scrutiny came from scientists from several European countries. They include plans for a far infra-red telescope, a large aperture X-ray telescope, and a solar observatory. The remaining missions are for studies of the earth's magnetosphere and the asteroid belt.

All the proposals take up contributions from British scientists, and the X-ray astronomy mission would be a special interest in this country. Professor Ken Pounds of Leicester University said the proposed X-ray telescope was an ambitious project which no single country could bring off. "But the UK is in a very good position to play a major role in any X-ray mission the ESA goes ahead with," he said.

The final decision on the first of the plans to be funded will not be taken until early in 1984. But the initial selection has been made just as the agency nears a choice on the winner from five candidate missions chosen for further study two years ago. The results of these studies will be presented to space scientists at a meeting in Holland later this month, with a decision expected in March.

This earlier series of projects includes a high resolution X-ray instrument, a solar studies satellite, a mission for observations in ultra-violet spectroscopy and the Kepler probe to examine the surface of Mars.

The strongest contender may be the ISO infra-red telescope, provided a way can be found of cooling the instrument properly in orbit. The problem with ISO is that it is likely to cost well over £100m, which is more than previous ESA projects.

This compares with Britain's contribution to ESA of £8m a year, paid by the Science and Engineering Research Council.

Sport bodies may merge

The position of sport in British universities looked set to improve this week as the General Council of the British Universities Sports Federation met at Lancaster University.

Delegates were considering the report of a working party, set up at last year's council, which recommends the amalgamation of the Universities Athletics Union and the BUISF to form a single body to administer sport in universities in the United Kingdom.

The cost of paying affiliation fees to both organizations, together with a financial squeeze on student sport in general, have forced universities to co-ordinate their differences by creating a more streamlined organization.

The main recommendations of the report look certain to be adopted. However, since a body with a new title would lose the charitable status currently enjoyed by the UAU and BUSF (worth some £10,000 a year in tax savings) the council may decide that a takeover of one organization by the other is preferable to a merger of equals under a new name.

Top jobs in university administration are going to applicants with little or no previous experience, according to the administrator of a London University college.

Mr Peter Waters, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, says that the profession is undervalued of individuals "but how is it that in a current shrinking field such appointments can continue to be made at, presumably, the expense of candidates with perhaps an ounce of experience in university administration?"

In a letter in the current *Conference of University Administrators*

newsletter Mr Waters refers to the appointment of major-general as secretary of Bedford and University colleges and to that of a retired governor of the Gilbert Islands as secretary of Imperial College. In fact Major-General Abraham of Bedford College retired last summer.

Mr Waters says he is not questioning the ability of individuals "but how is it that in a current shrinking field such appointments can continue to be made at, presumably, the expense of candidates with perhaps an ounce of experience in university administration?"

The tribunal found that the series of fixed term contracts was "genuine and not a ruse to disguise a continuing permanent appointment."

It added that by allowing Dr Blackbourn's contract to expire, the French department was "showing a proper regard for flexibility and the means available to finance appointments."

"Dr Scott believed that a younger native speaker who had recently spent all her life in France was more valuable."

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allow Dr Blackbourn to establish the groundwork for her PhD, and that it was normal practice for lecturers to be appointed for only one or two years so that they had fresh experience of their country or origin.

The tribunal found that the series of fixed term contracts was "genuine and not a ruse to disguise a continuing permanent appointment."

Welcome for reversal on teacher training

by Paul McGill

Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church have welcomed the Government's decision to abandon controversial recommendations for the reorganization of teacher education in Northern Ireland and to increase the intake of students at their colleges.

The Government accepted that there could be no forced move of the Catholic colleges to the site of the state-owned Stranmillis, as recommended by the interim Chilver report in May 1980. Higher student recruitment was agreed at St Mary's and St Joseph's colleges for next September.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party also welcomed the Government's change of heart, but the Rev. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party complained that the Catholic Church was being given a veto over the education system.

The pleasure of the Catholic church was marred by the discontinuity of the education minister, Mr Nicholas Scott, who put a brave face on the turnaround. Speaking after the publication of the White Paper announcing the Government's response to the interim Chilver report, he admitted that the result was less than ideal.

At the same time, he argued, the number of institutions providing training was being reduced from six to four and the result was a flexible system which would give value for money and meet the needs of education.

in Northern Ireland.

The decrease in training institutions will be the result of two mergers - that of the Ulster Polytechnic with the New University of Ulster and of St Mary's with St Joseph's. The latter merger was vetoed by the former Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor but was agreed by his recent successor, Dr Cathal Daly. With an intake to end of about 70 in recent years they were unable to offer a full range of courses on their own.

The White Paper rejected the Catholic claim to 40 per cent of the annual student teacher intake but noted that there were good reasons to wish to strengthen the colleges, including Stranmillis, and give them a more stable role. It was reinforced in this view by the "constructive attitude" which the colleges had adopted to the question of cooperation.

The Government said the intake to St Mary's and St Joseph's combined would rise from 130 last year to 195 next September, with Stranmillis taking a similar number. The rises will be accommodated partly by an increase in recruitment to meet impending growth in primary pupil numbers and partly by reductions in other institutions. Worst affected will be the NUI which will be cut by 24 to 70. Queen's University will get 90, the polytechnic, 60, and Londonderry Technical College, 20.

The effect will be an extra 60 student teachers, bringing the total of 630. The Catholic colleges' share of this will go up from 24 per cent to 31 per cent.

Trotskyist leaves NUS executive

The Socialist Worker Student Organization is to work independently of the National Union of Students after a rift over strategy.

The Trotskyist organization's sole member of the NUS executive, Mr Martin Kellest, has resigned, and SWSO is likely to decide not to seek to replace him in elections at the Easter conference, although it may run candidates for the five full-time jobs, including that of president.

Mr Kellest told the NUS conference late last year he was considering resigning shortly after delegates had absolved the Labour Students dominated leadership of any blame for a 11-day strike by headquarters.

He was particularly angry that Labour members of the executive were prepared to cross a picket line during an official dispute.

"The majority of the staff on the picket line were members of the Labour Party and they had to watch their leadership going through their picket line. I decided there was no place for me on the executive."

But the rift between SWSO and NUS goes deeper than the events surrounding the staff dispute. Mr Kellest says: "The role the executive played in the dispute epitomized the way the NUS has been developing."

A lot of people saw the change in political leadership at the last Easter conference as quite a good thing, but it has been shown that in terms of politics nothing has altered.

"The union is tending to act as a block on student campaigns in the colleges rather than being a part of them. We have seen the executive removing the campaigning aspect from the national union."

"It is quite a conscious change in that it has attempted over the years to change from a campaigning union into a union which tries to represent the average student - whatever that is - in negotiations with government."

"The 4 per cent increase in student awards shows that NUS is on a 'tiding to nothing'."

SWSO has never had more than two members on the executive in any one year, and Mr Kellest was this year charged only with the task of sharing responsibility for the union's nursing campaign.

But in the past two years it has organized a series of occupations of colleges over cuts and similar issues.



One of the most unusual ventures in commercial patronage of academic studies was launched last year when J & W Hardie, makers of Antiquary Whisky, funded a programme bringing 12 distinguished mediaeval and renaissance history experts to speak at Edinburgh. The programme is to continue for a second year, backed by a cheque presented to principal John Burnell (left) by J W Hardie's managing director, Mr Malcolm Kimmings (right). Looking on is former Edinburgh student, now the university's rector, Mr David Steel.

'Take administration seriously' plea

Top jobs in university administration are going to applicants with little or no previous experience, according to the administrator of a London University college.

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Labour call for Scots Assembly power

by Olga Wotjas
Scottish Correspondent

A call for Scottish universities to come under the control of a devolved Scottish Assembly instead of being run under a UK system will be made at the Scottish Labour Party conference in March.

One of the resolutions which will form the basis of the Perth conference says this must be implemented by the future Scottish Labour administration if there is to be "a genuine socialist education programme for Scotland".

The Scottish Assembly proposed by the Labour government in 1979 did not include control over the universities, and had no fiscal powers. But following the cuts, there has

been increasing feeling that the damage to Scottish universities could have been minimized had they been run by a Scottish Assembly with financial control, which appreciated the distinctiveness of the Scottish education system.

One motion calls for this year's conference to "reaffirm its total commitment to a Scottish parliament with strong economic powers" and for this to be given much more prominence in Labour's programme.

Another resolution states that some Scottish further education students, whose grants come from the local authorities, receive £11 a week less than young people on government training schemes.

These students are very much

worse off than university students whose mandatory grant can be £17 a week, it says, and it urges the conference to back the campaign by the National Union of Students for a minimum of £25 a week for students.

However, the draft resolutions are split in their reaction to the new training initiative.

The Socialist Educational Association praises the Manpower Services Commission's youth task group report for increasing the level of training available for the over-16s, and says all Labour controlled regional and district councils should apply to be the sponsors of the new scheme.

"Such a positive approach must be combined with setting up of an education and training committee in

each local authority to design and control these courses," it adds.

But other motions criticize the schemes as being an attempt by the Government to disguise the unemployment figures. One agrees that it may prepare young people for future employment but adds that there is little or no chance of finding a reasonable job afterwards. It urges local authorities to let trainees benefit from all the educational resources they have.

Another motion calls on Labour controlled local authorities and health boards not to cooperate with the MSC in youth opportunities and job sharing schemes since these MSC courses produced an "artificial figure" as registered unemployed.

Social scientists interact

by Paul Hather

The fledgling association of social science societies is preparing for a year of hard ground work in order to prove its usefulness in coordinating academic and financial enterprise.

More than 20 bodies are now affiliated to the Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences which holds its first annual general meeting in London next week to decide its constitution and to regularize subscriptions.

The ALSS will also be keen to develop new initiatives for the coming year. To date it has confined itself to a reactive role since it was set up a year ago. For example it welcomed Lord Rothschild's report on the Social Science Research Council and then condemned new Government cuts imposed on the SSRC.

Two ideas likely to be discussed at the annual meeting are how to develop a more systematic approach when dealing with the mass media, particularly television, and how to develop more direct contact between politicians and social scientists.

There is concern among many academics that complex ideas are often reduced to a few convenient sentences on television, sometimes greatly distorting the research results involved.

Members of the ALSS are also keen to see the association set up a research fund to give status equivalent to the Royal Society in the British Academy. However many members do feel there is a serious vacuum in the field of social sciences for such a prestige organization.

Professor John Edgridge, professor of sociology at Glasgow University and chairman of the association's executive, said it first aimed to pool knowledge among the different bodies, and defend the ideas they stood for.

Bodies affiliated to the ALSS include the British Sociological Association, the Association of Social Anthropologists, the Political Studies Association, the Royal Geographical Society and the British Psychological Society.

The ALSS has also incorporated the Social Science Action Committee which was established last year by 14 leading academics and convened by Professor Margaret Stacey, president of the ISA and professor of sociology at Warwick University. This now becomes the association's policy committee.

Its first major task is likely to help break down the strict boundaries between disciplines which have sprung in some areas of social science study. Professor Roy Johnson, professor of geography at Sheffield University and secretary of the Institute of British Geographers, said the association would help integrate knowledge far more.

Mr Edwin Ardener, a lecturer in anthropology at Oxford University, and chairman of the Association of Social Anthropologists, said the ALSS faced a lot of basic ground-work. For example it would need to find out what the different bodies did.

"No single association could have arranged such a conference. It will enable bodies to coordinate experiences", he said.

Sheffield research threatened

The future of research, particularly in engineering and in social sciences, is seriously threatened at Sheffield University.

A warning that the university may not be able to continue providing the support needed by industry is given by the vice-chancellor Professor Geoffrey Sims in his annual speech to Court.

At one time around 30 per cent of the university's grant from the University Grants Committee was for initiating and carrying out independent research. Now the level has fallen to a "dreadful" 5 per cent. Sheffield was desperately in need of adequate funds to support areas of work for which no other funding was available.

"The fullest career development for adults regardless of social or artificial education barriers should be provided through training and retaining opportunities "from manual apprentice through to professional engineer/ senior manager" and opportunities should be extended for the disabled and ethnic minorities.

And TASS calls for positive training action to eliminate sex discrimination in technical and higher paid grades within the engineering industry. "The waste of female potential for engineering is a national scandal and sex stereotyping in schools must be terminated."

And it demands reinstatement of the industrial training boards.

*TASS on Training, available from TASS, Onslow Hall, Little Green, Richmond Surrey, price 50p pence including postage.

Money available from the research councils to allow major programmes to grow from basic ideas was of little consequence if there was no money to fund the basic ideas. And while the Engineering Board of the Science and Engineering Research Council last year classified some £29m of university engineering research projects in its highest category of merit and importance it has no funds to support them even though many were of direct industrial relevance.

Sheffield, encouraged by successive governments, has played its full part in developing such projects but now could not afford to fund them. Similarly, recent attacks on the Social Science Research Council had seriously affected many university activities.

tant to the national economy and they must be given protection," wrote Dr Robbins. He believed that the temptation at local level would be to sacrifice institutions like the polytechnics, which were strong but expensive, in favour of the smaller local colleges before debate had determined the appropriate national balance.

Dr Robbins said there was unease about the prospect of severe limits on resources, particularly keeping equipment up-to-date.

"We have held the line for a number of years but equipment, particu-

larly that which is small-scale and necessary for undergraduate teaching, is becoming worn."

Plymouth benefited from the new formula for allocating funds from the pool with a minimal 2 per cent cut. The polytechnic interpreted this as just reward for being one of the three polytechnics with the lowest unit costs after allowing for the high proportion of laboratory-based students.

Agreement was also reached with Devon County Council to have a steady quota of 4,600 full-time equivalent students by 1983/84.

Publishing record attacked

by Paul Hather

Professor David Donnison, former chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, has attacked the publishing record of the Department of Education, drawing attention to its publishing record only when it suited the department.

Professor Donnison, professor of social and regional planning at City University, told a meeting of the Social Research Association in London that state departments using taxpayers' money had an obligation to publish all research.

He said research results should be published and not simply "used to inform the regime". Such times will depend on the completion of the particular government it was about to publish.

The department this week denied that publication was unreasonably withheld. It commissioned research on a customer-contractor principle because it wanted to use the results. Publication depended on cost, "usefulness" and the likely "width of audience".

After his speech Professor Donnison declined to give specific examples, but he said he had never expected to see this kind of thing happening in this country.

He told the SRA if a private company carried out some research, the results belonged to the company. But if the state using taxpayers' money pays for the research and uses

the public's time in collecting information, then it has an obligation to publish, assuming the results are academically publishable.

"Who will believe the good research funded by the Department of Education if they also believe the bad ones are censored?" Drawing from experience, he held up the publishing record of the Department of Health and Social Services as exemplary.

Professor Donnison, who has written widely on housing and social research, and for seven years was director of the former Centre for Environmental Studies, urged professors and others in secure posts, to defend such principles which young researchers found it difficult to insist on.

He said bodies like the SRA, which has almost full members and aims to promote and defend social research, should draw up general principles on publication for academics to follow.

He wanted a clause inserted into all contractual agreements between customers and researchers requiring proper consultation but preventing the publication of research results from being unduly delayed or forbidden.

A DOE spokesman said commissioned research was often technical and highly specialized. It was often considered not useful or too costly to publish. But copies were usually available for a select group who

might be interested. After a few years interval, researchers were free to publish if they wanted anyway.

Professor Donnison went on to discuss present difficulties of social research. One reason was that new issues - women's rights, new family forms, race relations, conservatism and nuclear power - did not fit easily into existing models of study.

"Now we are in the stage of cut-backs," he said. "We must remember we will never get back to the 1950s." He said the best graduates were no longer staying in the academic world, shifting responsibility for good research to government departments and local authorities as well.

● The SRA passed a resolution deploring the decision by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, to cut the Social Science Research Council's budget again against recommendations put in Lord Koffis's official inquiry.

Ms Christine Farrell, who chairs the SRA and is reader in social studies at North London Polytechnic, said it was tragic the discrimination against social sciences was continuing. She condemned government plans to allocate no more than a few "new blood" university posts to the social sciences.

The SRA decided not to increase its £8 annual membership fee to avoid additional hardship to researchers and to encourage new members, who would receive six newsletters a year and free reports.

New scheme to help small businesses

A programme to help small businesses increase their export sales will be launched next month by the Scottish Enterprise Foundation.

Under the direction of Professor Tom Cannon of the University of Stirling, the department of business studies, believes small firms can overcome the difficulties they face in breaking into international markets if they have the right advice and support.

The right advice and support. The programme has funding from the Manpower Services Commission for six months and will help managers identify and exploit new market opportunities.

Professor Cannon is also behind a scheme to offer training and grants worth £5,000 to each of 30 Scottish graduates later this year, to help them go into business.

The "graduate enterprise" scheme is to encourage students to consider setting up on their own. Backing will come from the MSC and private sector sponsors and the best business plans will get free places on 18-week courses at Stirling, free office facilities and a £1,500 grant for market research.

Third agent for PICKUP

The Government's PICKUP programme went into high gear this week with the appointment of a third regional agent, Mr Peter T. Wilson, who is to supervise work in the south who is to supervise work in the south.

Mr Wilson who was principal lecturer of management studies at West Bromwich College where he was responsible for setting up the College's small firms unit, is to be based at the University of Aston's science park.

As the regional agent for PICKUP, Mr Wilson will be developing the expertise and contacts to help small firms in the north and west to update their work skills across all types of work and at all levels.

Mr Wilson plans to visit the four colleges of education, polytechnics and universities, four in the six counties about 50 colleges in the six counties. He will also be studying the demand for updating through visits to local firms and through meetings with employers, trade unions and professional associations.

A start has now been made with the help of Department of Education and Science funding worth £225,000 on a two-year research project to



Wilson: developing expertise

explore and set up an electronic directory of short PICKUP courses. The project which is being undertaken by Guildford Educational Services Ltd aims to set up the directory by the end of September 1984, it will be run on a self-financing basis. During the experimental period the directory will be capable of storing details of up to 20,000 courses in England and Wales.

London's science review out soon

by Jon Turney
Science Correspondent

London University's single-subject working parties in science are all on target to report early in the new year, and the tight timetable is seen by most of the academics affected as a good way of resolving long-standing uncertainties.

Maths and pharmacy are likely to prove most contentious among the four science subjects currently under review. In maths, the complexities arise because the original Subject Area Review Committee in physical sciences suggested that the maths disciplines could be restructured by shifting individuals rather than whole departments.

This means some researchers may try to escape college mergers they find unattractive by seeking new affiliations elsewhere - the amalgamation of Bedford and Royal Holloway colleges may suffer individuals to be just reward for being one of the three polytechnics with the lowest unit costs after allowing for the high proportion of laboratory-based students.

Agreement was also reached with Devon County Council to have a steady quota of 4,600 full-time equivalent students by 1983/84.

er please everyone. Professor Ian Roxburgh of Queen Mary College, chairman of the board of studies in maths, said that he hoped the working party would produce a scheme based on a combination of people's personal preferences and members' view of the health of their party, which will also consider statistics but excludes considering science on January 20, and hopes to report early in February.

The announcement of a working party in pharmacy raised eyebrows at the existing departments - at Chelsea College and the School of Pharmacy - as the SARC in biological sciences recommended that both sciences should continue. Sir Frank Hartley, a former dean of the school of pharmacy, is chairing another small working party looking at possible uses of the large vacant site at St George's Hospital in Tooting. One suggestion is that a unified school of pharmacy could occupy this site.

However, no firm proposals were tabled at the pharmacy group's first meeting in December, and members await the second meeting on January 14 for further guidance on the university's intentions.

The two remaining subjects appear relatively straightforward. The geology working party met for the first time two weeks ago (December 13) and is set for a final meeting on January 17. Squeezing the seven existing geology departments into three, as the board of studies in geology proposes, is likely to entail amalgamation of departments at Kings, Bedford and Chelsea Colleges and Birkbeck, Queen Mary and University Colleges.

The physics working party report, which is already in preparation after one meeting, is also likely to follow the framework put forward by the SARC in physical sciences. The SARC said there should be five major sites for physics in the university, each capable of becoming a centre of excellence. The five strongest candidates are University College, Imperial College, Queen Mary College, a new college department at Kings College and one at Bedford and Royal Holloway Colleges.

The working party will then have to decide the best distribution of staff from the smaller departments such as Westfield College around these five sites.

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North American news

Interference 'is suffocating universities'

A major report by the Carnegie Foundation calls for an end to the 'destructive cycle of outside intervention', on America's campuses. Peter David reports

Admirers of the American higher education system habitually applaud its loose structure, particularly the absence of cramping government controls and the "mixed economy" of private and public institutions free to respond quickly to the changing patterns of student demand.

In recent years, however, several university leaders have complained that this traditional image is no longer accurate. According to a major new report by the influential Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, public insistence on accountability has begun to destroy traditional notions of academic government and weaken the authority of university leaders.

"Campus leaders, from presidents on down, feel caught in a confusing bureaucratic web that demands accountability, but provides few incentives for responsible decision-making," the report says. "As government oversight expands, and as more agencies intervene, it is increasingly difficult to know where decisions are and are not being made."

The report has been two years in the making and was written mainly by the foundation's president, Mr Ernest Boyer. It is being published at a time when most university leaders are more interested in financial matters than in academic government, but the foundation hopes it will stimulate debate in the academic community and eventually legislation aimed to help academics "regain control" of their campuses.

Mr Boyer blames a number of factors for the erosion of academic self-government. Academics are playing an ever diminishing role in running their own institutions; specialist accrediting bodies are demanding a detailed say in the running of academic courses; and state and federal government agencies are imposing stricter controls on public and private universities alike.

The report says that more than 50 specialized groups, ranging from the Association to the American Board of Funeral Service Education, are involved in accrediting higher education courses. Some use the accreditation process to impose unreasonable and restrictive standards. These agencies often stipulate in detail how universities and colleges which seek accreditation for their courses should be organized. The

accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools, for example, insists on knowing the names and educational details of every member of staff. Many accrediting bodies lay down exact staff-student ratios and dictate the precise length of courses.

The foundation expresses special concern about the way accreditation has been linked in some states with the granting of licences to practise particular professions. Mr Boyer says at least 21 specialist accrediting associations have persuaded states that graduation from an accredited course is necessary to acquire a licence.

"Through this process, specialized associations, indirectly at least, also control key decisions on the campus," the report says. "If specialized accreditation is used to protect the turf of a specific department against the larger interests of the institution, the campus becomes a holding company for special interests, receiving from each professional team its non-negotiable demands."

"Then, the integrity of higher education is violated by pressure from within."

Another reason for the erosion of university self-government has been the growth of the higher education system and the grouping of many institutions into multi-campus systems with a single governing body, the report says.

In 21 states a single consolidated board governs all higher education institutions. Most states have yet another tier of statewide councils and commissions. By the end of the 1960s virtually every state has drafted master plans for higher education and in some the coordinating agency was asked to draw up a consolidated higher education budget.

This process, developed when higher education was expanding, holds dangers now that the system is facing contraction. Mr Boyer believes. American colleges and universities are no longer seen as independent institutions but as units of a statewide system. As a result, effective authority has begun to move beyond the campus; at least three state legislatures now determine staff-student ratios.

The federal government, too, has begun to play a bigger role in university government because of the huge sums provided to colleges through student grants and loans and



Boyer wrote most of the report

funding of research projects. The report praises the government for channelling so much money to the universities with relatively little interference, but points to some "red flags which cannot be ignored."

They included attempts by the federal government to introduce regulations protecting the rights of human subjects in research, and recent moves to curtail the publication of scientific research in the interests of national security.

A major area of government interference in the running of universities has come as a result of attempts to enforce civil rights laws, Mr Boyer says. "The most significant points of tension in civil rights enforcement relate to the essential core — the freedom of faculty members to select, to evaluate and to promote colleagues."

"Academics insist that this process must be uninhibited, possibly even confidential, while government officials claim that they must review the process to ensure that no discrimination has occurred."

The report argues that over the last 15 years the civil rights laws have pushed colleges and universities in the right direction, stirring increased awareness of the entrenched barriers often faced by members of minorities and women.

"Federal and state enforcement officials should, however, be extremely circumspect in stepping into matters that historically have been resolved through internal governance

procedures."

"Such intervention, even in the name of high principle, can lay the groundwork for long-range changes in the nature of our society that would be in the interest of none."

The report says that it is the cumulative impact of government intervention, rather than single issues, which is threatening to suffocate institutions. In one year, the University of California reported filing 229 "unique" reports with 32 separate federal agencies.

In Pennsylvania, meanwhile, the state central government controlled all purchases over \$1,000; all contracts; computer configurations; consultants fees and honoraria over \$2,000.

"Such detailed supervision of campus activities may at first blush appear to be administrative only. However, the issue goes deeper. Trying to administer a college by remote control ignores principles of good management, reflects a climate of distrust, and assumes incorrectly that if centralized management is increased, efficiency will improve."

The Carnegie Report concludes with a large number of recommendations for action which will help universities and colleges regain control of their own affairs and staunch the flow of power and initiative to outside bureaucracies.

They include strengthening the power and expertise of boards of trustees; restoring real decision-making powers to academic senates; and curtailing the powers of specialized accrediting agencies.

State governments are urged to deal only with broad budget allocations for universities and colleges, leaving the institutions responsible for reviewing academic programmes. The federal government should be held at bay by developing better methods for the self-regulation of universities by national and regional associations.

Mr Boyer says that the destructive cycle of outside intervention in the running of universities must be stopped. "The government initiative must return to where it belongs: to the campus itself. But structural and administrative reforms, like those proposed in this report, can only go so far towards achieving this goal. What is most required is no less than a rebirth of leadership in higher education."

little known and unpublished scholarships. "Usually, however, the criteria for these little known scholarships is defined very narrowly. I am not convinced the search really try to uncover these small scholarships. If they researched all the numerous small scholarships for every client the cost of research would prevent them from making a profit."

A far better alternative for students seeking financial aid is a letter to a college or university or a couple of hours in the reference section of a public library, Mr Chenelle concluded.

Many parents and students believed private firms could uncover

high schools or the offices of financial aid at a college or university. Some firms elicited clients by guaranteeing a list of funding sources, for example by promising to provide details of ten scholarship funds. But often, such lists included well-known sources such as federal loan programmes.

Mr Chenelle said that after studying a sample of the materials supplied by some of the companies he concluded that the information they supplied was, at best, identical to information available free from most

of food and first aid supplies that people should have ready.

He is conducting workshops for 12 cities throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Eventually, he hopes to expand his business to helping people with other kinds of natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes.

Eugene Volokh began his career when he was only 13. He started working for Hewlett-Packard, an engineering firm that was started by two students 43 years ago.

Now Volokh is a senior in the University of California in Los Angeles, majoring in computer science. He has started his own consulting company and is producing programs that protect computers from unauthorized access. "Instead of giving a password, my system asks a question from the user's personal profile such as 'What was your mother's maiden name?'"

When Heidi Roizen, now at the Stanford Business School, and her partner, Tim Draper, currently at the Harvard Business School, decided to start their venture, it wasn't just to make a lot of money.

Crisis in teacher training

Two new reports have confirmed fears that the United States is facing a massive crisis in teacher training and appears unable to attract enough able school-leavers to the teaching profession.

One report, based on a long-term national survey by the Department of Education, has found that the number and academic standard of college-bound school-leavers who intend to major in education is continuing to drop dramatically.

The other, published by the University of California, warns of a national shortage of mathematics and science teachers which will eventually impede the growth of the high technology industries on which the nation is pinning its economic hopes.

According to the Department of Education study, the academic records of higher school girls planning to major in education were lower in 1980 than they had been in 1972, and lower than those of classmates who wanted to take other subjects.

Among 1980 school seniors who planned to go to college only about 3 per cent of the males and 10 per cent of the females intended to major in education. These percentages were substantially lower than those for 1972 college aspirants — about 3 per cent lower for males and 9 per cent lower for females.

The 1980 school-leavers aiming for education had lower scores than fellow college aspirants on reading, vocabulary and mathematics tests.

In the case of women, but not men, the difference in academic qualifications between those planning to major in education and those in other fields had widened since 1972. The test scores of all students had declined since 1972 but the decline was steeper in the case of students who wanted to teach.

One result of this trend, highlighted in the University of California report, is that high-prestige universities with stringent entrance requirements find it impossible to recruit enough students for teacher training.

The school of education at California's flagship Berkeley campus requires a minimum of 3 of a possible 4 grade points average for admission to teacher training programmes.

In 1981, the report continues, the entire nine-campus University of California system had only 22 students enrolled in mathematics teaching programmes and 47 in science teaching. At the same time the California state university system had only 75 preparing for mathematics and 127 for science teaching.

The report puts the blame for the crisis solely on the low salaries paid to teachers. It cites national studies which indicate that five times as many maths and science teachers are leaving teaching for non-teaching jobs as are leaving for retirement.

A recent survey of schools in the high-technology area around Palo Alto in California found that six out of eight districts were losing maths and science teachers to industry.

They decided to make a board game from the experience of attending Stanford. They thought that besides tuition money, it would provide a great learning experience.

They found their venture could work even with only part-time commitment. In addition to attending business school, Roizen is still on the payroll at Tandem and manages marketing for her brother's software company.

They were able to finance "The Game" from their personal funds. Business loans are often difficult for young students to obtain. They recovered their initial investment. "We figured we could produce the games for about \$5 each and sell them to stores for \$10, which could change to \$17 at the counter. If the games were a total disaster, we figured we could always set up a stand on campus and sell them for \$5 to help recover tuition money."

"The Game" is a board map of Stanford. The player goes around in one of four roles either as a pre-med, pre-law, pre-business or liberal arts type. As the player goes around

collects resume stars, social points and school credits.

If you are a liberal arts major and score above 4,000, the highest possible number of 3,000, your novel will win a Pulitzer. Above 3,000 you are a newspaper reporter, and below 1,000 a starving artist.

Marcin Hedeler, began her cookie business The Cookie Hobbit, while a Stanford journalism major. For three years with her sister, she has been making and selling more than 3,000 cookies each day in a large shopping centre.

As a youngster she wanted to have her own bakery. Several of her recipes come from mothers and grandmothers of the boys she dated.

"It's been a good business. People always have enough money in their pockets to buy a 45 cent cookie," she said.

Overseas news

UN to set up genetic engineering centre

by Thomas I. Lund

Canada, Sweden and Belgium have offered to host an international research centre in genetic engineering intended to serve the developing world. The project, sponsored by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), is headed by more than 100 countries and some of the best brains in biotechnology.

The project is the brainchild of Dr Saran Narsing, a molecular biologist with the National Research Council of Canada and a consultant of the Vienna-based UNIDO organization. Among the centre's initial tasks will be studies to further the development of cheap energy from waste materials as well as self-fertilizing wheat, a protein rice hybrid and a new anti-malaria vaccine.

A staff of 50 research scientists and 40 technicians is envisaged. Provision would be made for 20 post-doctoral fellowships and 100 trainees to study at the centre for two years each. Capital investment and operational cost for the first five years, including staff, is estimated at \$4.4m. Finance is expected from the host country, various international development funding agencies and the governments supporting the scheme.

The idea goes back to early 1981 when UNIDO brought together for a very private meeting in Vienna a dozen world-renowned scientists concerned with genetic engineering. The meeting was chaired by Dr R. W. of Cornell University and Dr Narsing was present. The scientists' proposal to provide genetic engineering research and training facilities to poor countries is now supported by influential global organizations including the International Federation of Institutes for Advanced

Studies and the Club de Genéve. Dr Narsing said: "The world is entering a genetic revolution for which developing countries should train their young people in biotechnology. They must take advantage of these advances or they will be left out."

A provisional work programme for the centre, put forward by a group of specialists, is aimed to do that. The centre would seek early applications of its findings — for example in the development of diagnostic kits for human and animal diseases, and of enzymes for food processing. Besides selective application of advanced biotechnology to the hungry world, the main programme elements would focus on energy and fertilizer, hydrocarbon microbiology concerned with tertiary oil recovery, human and animal vaccines, agricultural and food products.

"During the next five years it will be possible to grow better crops," said Dr Narsing. "In the case of rice, for example — which has no protein — a gene can be inserted to produce a hybrid that tastes like rice but has a lot of protein. We can even manipulate its genes to speed up growth, so you can have four crops a year instead of three."

A recent report issued in Ottawa by a federal task force on biotechnology called for a national master plan to support its development in Canada as an essential element of the nation's future industrial and economic growth.

In September, the Swedish government announced a multimillion dollar investment in genetic engineering research involving the Wallenberg Laboratory at Uppsala University in collaboration with private industry.

The headquarters complex will provide supporting services such as a printing press, a computer for data processing, sound and television studios and a central library.

The Open University was set up with the transfer of students previously registered for courses at the External Degrees Agencies and the Institute for Distance Education. During the first half of this year 7,350 students were admitted.

Nearly 60 per cent of the work connected with the reclamation of 14 out of the 18 acres of marshland near Colombo allotted to the Open University has been completed. The cost of the building was 4.5m rupees. Two temporary buildings will provide a floor space of 30,000 square feet.

The university has been modelled on the British Open University.

The headquarters complex will provide supporting services such as a

recently that a smaller proportion of young people were going on to tertiary education. The chairman of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Professor David Caro, said the government was going to have to do something about staff cuts to make its position logical.

He said universities had been increasing the number of staff on short-term contracts and appointing junior staff to replace more senior academics. Some universities had money and had in getting outside money and had managed to maintain their staffing levels but now even they were beginning to suffer.

According to one survey, the large universities appear to be taking the brunt of the job cuts. At the University of New South Wales academic staff numbers have fallen by 5.6 per cent since last year. There are now 1,490 academics at the university — 89 fewer

than last year. At Queensland University, 16 professors have been declared "interimly vacant" — double the number last year — leaving the university with only 97 professors, 25 per cent below the Australian average. The president of Queensland's academic board, Dr Brian Adkins, said it was a matter of great concern that funding considerations had forced the university to suspend so many of its senior academic positions which were important for the vigour of teaching and research programmes.

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Last week the Further Education and Curriculum Review and Development Unit was officially unshackled from the financial and manpower constraints that Government departments suffer, and given a limited freedom.

This release granted by the Department of Education and Science took the form of independent status as a limited company and a new name as the Further Education Unit. More to the point the unit's budget is to be twice its present size at £1.5m, though expenditure will not be totally under its own control.

To coincide with this the unit has a new board and new chairman in Joslyn Owen, the chief education officer for Devon, who takes over from Dr George Tolley, now heading the Manpower Services Commission's Open Tech Unit.

The unit's new funding which is to rise to £2m in 1984-85 is a mere bagatelle compared to the £1,000m of the MSC. But it is widely acknowledged that the DFS's decision to strengthen the unit as its educational answer to the commission is partly an attempt at stemming persistent criticisms that it is leaving all the running to the commission in 16-19 development.

Moreover, it provided a solution to the problems facing the FEU which had wanted the DES earlier that without more resources it would have to neglect part of its remit.

The department's enthusiasm for the FEU has not, however, always been so great. In 1979 the unit nearly fell victim to a quango purge which it escaped after general opposition.

Since then, it has survived to become a positive force in further education, especially with its publication of *Books for Choice* which has been the foundation of the new 17-plus certificate.

From this period the unit's influence and political bias began to grow. This is something which Mr Jack Mansell, its director, has been trying to foster.

Under his direction the unit has not been hesitant in wielding influence or in being critical of its paymaster in responding to various proposals affecting the further education field. Recently responding to proposals for setting up a consortium to run the new 17-plus certificate, the unit said it deplored the lack of consultation and delay in introducing the new qualification.

Instead it suggested that an ad hoc working party of validating bodies should be given six months to produce policy and an action programme. In the meantime it said no more pre-vocational courses should be started and a commitment to rationalization be made.

Unit makes the most of its new freedom

Patricia Santinelli on the tasks facing the revamped Further Education Unit.



Jack Mansell: trying to foster influence

These comments, fuelled by opposition from other bodies and a definite impact on the DES, for it emerged shortly afterwards that it was now planning an interim qualification based on already existing pre-vocational courses and might drop its plan for a consortium.

But perhaps one of the greatest problems that the FEU faces in its immediate future is to restrain the MSC's attempts at taking control of the further education curriculum through its Youth Training Scheme.

It is clear that the commission has tried to impose its own views on what should or can be taught on YOP courses as was shown by its opposition to elements of political education in Life and Social Skills courses.

This kind of policy appears to be pursued in plans for YTS. The commission is seemingly bent on converting the wheel, having decided on the core, levels and grades students will be awarded before having established an agreed curriculum, or considered taking on board existing examples of good practice.

Jack Mansell, however, points out that the MSC cannot be stopped, only influenced and that anyway it has limited functions: the maintenance of a reservoir of skills and the improvement and creation of a flexible workforce.

While the FEU and the further education service, though inseparably bound to work with the commission and its initiatives must direct their efforts within a much wider framework.

But one definite coup for the FEU has been an agreement with the MSC to issue joint guidelines. The first published recently dealt with curriculum design and implementation for the New Training Initiative.

This reinforces the concept of basic skills based on the FEU's own checklist outlined in its Vocational Preparation document. The unit has argued that adherence to the check-

list is more likely to lead to programmes related to the needs of individual participants and employers. On the whole Jack Mansell says that he does not expect conflict with the MSC, except perhaps at philosophical and local level. But he regards this as healthy provided it increases the partnership between education and training and achieves sound educational results.

But predominantly the unit's interest now that it has increased funding will be not only to maintain and extend its achievements in the pre-vocational field, but in making greater impact within further education as a whole.

Mr Mansell says there are many within the service who are enthusiastic about the work of the unit - at least 100 colleges are involved in carrying out work originated by the FEU - but there are just as many who have not heard of the FEU.

He points out that in a way further education has been protected from the outside world by constant high demand, but he believes it is vital for its future that it should respond coherently to new developments.

This means not only the NTI but for example the demands for new skills created by the introduction of new technology in commerce and industry, as well as the prospect of educating young people for whom no jobs may exist.

In many ways, he says, the further education service faces a difficult time. Far like schools it has not been criticized, on one hand for not providing training which matches the needs of industry and commerce, and on the other for educating young people for whom no employment exists. Colleges therefore need guidance as to what their future role should be.

Jack Mansell firmly believes that a new philosophy should be developed within FE which does not consist merely of reacting to outside developments but which is much more

continuous, profound and long term. He believes that a more active role for further education could emerge by drawing together the four major strands that the FEU has been dealing with such as vocational preparation, adult education, special needs and new technology.

For example in vocational preparation where the FEU has expended some 50 per cent of its resources, there have been countless research projects, most of which have been published.

These have included developing the concept of a "Personal Guidance Base" while in "Progressing from Vocational Preparation", it examined the conditions that needed to be satisfied if vocational preparation is to be accredited and recognized by FE.

Others included a policy document on *Teaching Skills* which suggested strategies for the further training and development of further education teaching staff involved in vocational preparation.

In adult education, the FEU is doing a substantial amount of curriculum development on behalf of the DES PICKUP programme while at Surrey University, the FEU has sponsored a project looking at curriculum design for the education of adults.

Basically the project is investigating whether there is a curriculum philosophy for the education of adults which can be adopted and what resources are needed.

At the same time FEU has been expanding its work in the area of special needs. It sponsored a major review undertaken by the National Foundation for Educational Research into the state of the art of 14-19-year-olds with special needs.

The review indicated a general lack of research and development in this area, the need for less stereotyping, greater curriculum development support and greater expertise. Moreover the FEU is to act as an

agent for the DES on a project worth substantial funding which involves preparing a teaching package for slow learners. This has gone out to tender not only to colleges but to research and development bodies.

The fourth strand of the FEU work, and one again which offers a pointer to its future direction is in new technology. Its first paper *Computer Aided Design in FE* commissioned from Dr Peter Ingham at Birmingham Polytechnic has only just been published.

The paper says that since the widespread adoption of CAD by British industry is inevitable, further education has an obvious role to play if it is to remain a significant contributor to technological training.

In many ways the FEU has already attempted to show these four strands together in its plans for its experimental colleges project.

In its recent document, *Promoting Curriculum Innovation* which outlines the projects already on-going in this field, the FEU says it wants colleges to take on a more general experimental role, so that experimentation percolates through the entire institution.

At the moment experimentation usually takes place in one or two departments of an institution, but the FEU would like colleges to take on all the different aspects, vocational preparation, adult education, special needs and new technology on board and become test beds for further education curriculum ideas.

It is hoping to discuss this sometime this month or early in February with principals of interested institutions. The likelihood is that some 10 to 20 colleges will be chosen.

In its plans for making greater impact in mainstream FE, the unit is already in progress with the nearly completed evaluation of BEC courses.

But it will also probably expand and generate more projects such as the one at Central London Polytechnic. This is a project in microelectronics which is examining whether the technology of microchips has settled down sufficiently to establish a set curriculum in the subject. One of the problems in this area has been caused by the enormously rapid changes in equipment and software.

The unit has also sponsored two projects in robotics. One is a Technician Education Council project looking into the impact of robots on technician curriculum.

A group of colleges are trying to produce basic curricula and equipment which might enable the teaching of robotics to be less expensive. At the moment colleges find it extremely costly to replicate what is going on in industry.

Preparing for a life without sight

What do students learn at the Royal National College for the Blind? Photographs by Patrick Sutherland. Report by Paul Flather

Blindness is a severe handicap. But with care, training, patience, and some new technology, a blind person can probably accomplish most of the tasks the sighted take for granted. At the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford blind and partially sighted students play cricket, prepare dinner parties, learn shorthand and have taken to archery with enthusiasm. The college's archery club even attracts members from the town.

The college is the only one in Britain, probably the only one in the Commonwealth, designed to cater for the visually handicapped. It moved first to Kent, then to Rowton Castle in Shropshire. But a site in the middle of the country was never considered ideal for training handicapped students to cope with normal life.

By now it was catering for between 150 and 180 students and was funded by discretionary student grants from local education author-

ities. Plans to move to a Birmingham site in 1976 foundered, but with official approval the college governors acted quickly and took over the Hereford teacher training college destined for closure under the reorganization.

The college moved in October 1978, and currently has 215 students, evenly split between men and women. About 150 of them live in the college and the rest in nearby lodgings. The majority are British, but others come from Nigeria and the Middle East, and some from Ghana, Europe and America, and two Vietnamese refugees have just started. Most are aged 16 to 21 and their courses last three years. There are mature students too, some of whom lost their sight recently.

All students take courses in the mobility and living skills department, learning how to become independent, how to apply for and secure jobs, and how to find their way in unfamiliar surroundings. Most are able to go alone to Hereford on trips by the end of their first year. They live out in their final year. They might learn about kitchen hygiene, or buying food; a typical project might be to give a dinner party for three friends.

Mr Lance Marshall, principal since 1976, said: "It's terribly dangerous being blind. You've got to be prepared to accept nasty shocks. For us it is like walking into walls every day." A former public school housemaster, he sees a break from the home environment as essential to giving students personal confidence. "We train them to believe they can do most things as well as sighted people."

The students' union puts on discos and organizes a range of activities and sports, including yoga, pottery, trekking, Australian handball, and even matches in football and cricket. Both are played with a white football filled with ball bearings; in cricket bowlers must make the ball bounce before the batsmen, and blind people can catch people out first bounce while the partially sighted must make a clean catch. Archery is a real test of the "orientation" of the student who must rely entirely on spoken information to aim.

The majority of students are in the department of business studies, learning braille shorthand up to 140 words per minute, telex and tele-



Work experience forms an important part of the business studies course.

phone exchange skills, word processing, typing and even filing. Plans trainers are still in great demand, three out of four applicants for the 31 places at the college do not get in first time. All must show some aptitude for oral discrimination. A handful of students learn music till time, and 20 take more vocational courses in the new computer studies department, which is likely to expand.

All get work experience, either with Hereford firms, or in the holidays with firms near their homes, sometimes conveniently leading to permanent employment. The BBC regularly takes college students for work experience. Currently four out of five business studies students find jobs - a better striking rate than the national average. About a dozen students a year also enrol on the general studies courses, with a few going on to higher education in universities and polytechnics. Some regularly go to the North London School of Physiotherapy for the Blind, to become qualified physiotherapists.

The college has built a sound reputation over the past century, and the opening of a new building will help to consolidate its standing. Former students include an under secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and the leader of whom are totally blind. The philosophy of the school is probably best summed up by the feeling that most of the students wander about the college believing they can really see, while everyone else appears to be blind. Mr Marshall says: "It is a belief we certainly do not discourage."

overcome her bereavement and gave her new assurance; the teacher who came along because she felt dissatisfied but did not know why, and who changed her job after the course. Most of them did not have much in common with each other but the course was a camaraderie and something akin to pleasure from learning which after slugging away at A levels and exams is not always part of the intellectual equipment 18-year-olds take to college or university.

Classes are held once a week from 10pm until 3pm to fit in with school times and the day is divided into four times or less equal parts although more or less rigid: reading, writing and communicating skills; cultural studies including literature and the arts; the environment and social relations and finally, opportunities for work and further study. The move this year

might have given the lecturer a hard time but was not their fault that they did not feel convinced. More likely it was in the critique which failed to take account of their daily lives. Dissertations and individual study seem as much from their personal lives as from formal course subjects.

And demand is growing. Two women came into the Greta (the Greenwich education and training advice centre) which has just taken over the street-level shopfront of the polytechnic as a new advisory service for adults through the cooperation of higher education colleges and adult education institutes. They wanted to do a degree: "I know I talk common," said one, "but I taught myself O level maths and I can do it."

where they want to go next. The degree of emphasis which is placed on achievement in the traditional sense is reflected in the nature of the course.

At Thames Polytechnic they avoid competitiveness and "adding up the league table" in the notices over for women course. Three years ago Tony Hendry and Pam Linn, both former teachers - now the polytechnic's continuing education unit - attended a conference organized by the Equal Opportunities Commission on second chance courses for adult women who return to education and resolved to set up one in south-east London.

They keep in touch with those who have been on the course - very many so far because the course is so new - and invited *The Times* to meet a group of the women of varied ages and backgrounds and discuss what they thought about it.

There was the widow with curious young grandchildren who was "terrified of becoming a cabbage" who found the mental stimulus and enjoyed reading Doris Lessing and Philip Larkin as part of the course; the woman whose husband had recently died found the course helped her

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Paradoxically, the more one course puts on getting a job or what achievements may follow the more it may deter the very people it sets out to help, particularly those who lack confidence or have no clear idea



Visually handicapped cricketers listen for the ball which is filled with ball-bearings

A second chance to learn

Felicity Jones discovers that new opportunities for women are proving very popular

For those who move easily in the education world, it is hard to imagine what terror it can instil in those who dropped out too early, disillusioned, rejected or just plain bored by our system of learning.

The thought of entering a lecture room full of young students in an attempt to try and pick up where you left off 20 years ago before the children were born is sufficient to make the flesh weak although the spirit may be there. The proliferation and success of fresh horizon or new opportunities courses has been a measure of the powerful thirst that exists for education and the chance such courses provide as a bridge back into a lost world. Education is much sweeter the second time around.

It is just over 10 years since the first new opportunities for women was pioneered at Hatfield Polytechnic in 1971. Since then, similar courses have appeared around the country and at Hatfield over 1,000 women have passed through. Many go on to further education or move into employment, but that is not to say such courses always require a definable goal.

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They keep in touch with those who have been on the course - very many so far because the course is so new - and invited *The Times* to meet a group of the women of varied ages and backgrounds and discuss what they thought about it.

There was the widow with curious young grandchildren who was "terrified of becoming a cabbage" who found the mental stimulus and enjoyed reading Doris Lessing and Philip Larkin as part of the course; the woman whose husband had recently died found the course helped her

where they want to go next. The degree of emphasis which is placed on achievement in the traditional sense is reflected in the nature of the course.

Paradoxically, the more one course puts on getting a job or what achievements may follow the more it may deter the very people it sets out to help, particularly those who lack confidence or have no clear idea

where they want to go next. The degree of emphasis which is placed on achievement in the traditional sense is reflected in the nature of the course.

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Public sector eyes university pay packets

David Jobbins reports on the lecturers' latest pay round

Lecturers' unions face a three-way wrestling match for small stakes and high risks in the 1983 pay round. In the Government corner ministers are firmly insisting that market forces should hold sway while restricting the salary increases that the taxpayer should bear to 3½ per cent.

Across the ring the local authority employers and vice chancellors are uncertain how much room they will have for manoeuvre if - as the Government forecasts - the rate of inflation continues to fall or stabilizes well down into single figures.

The trade unions, despite underlying unity based around the TUC public services committee strategy for claims designed to compensate workers for lost living standards over a 12 month period, face special strains.

The mood of the moment is to squeeze differentials to aid the lower paid while restoring or maintaining relativities between the university and public sectors.

The chances of achieving both aims are slim and the consequences of failure for the largest post school education union, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, could be serious.

Natfhe's policy, decided before Christmas at the first special salaries conference in the union's history is to seek a £280 lump sum for all further education lecturers and a percentage increase in line with other public sector claims. While the £280 has been ratified by the Bursham further education committee teachers' panel a final decision on the size of the percentage claim is not expected until later this month, but all the indications are it will be in the order of 12 per cent.

The union also demands - as an "absolute priority" among structural claims - automatic transfer from the top of the lecturer 1 grade, where thousands of staff are stuck, to the lecturer 2 grade.

If the negotiators fully accept this constraint laid down by the special conference against the wishes of the executive, then they will be relegating to a lower priority part of the claim which is of crucial importance to higher education lecturers - an upward extension of the senior lecturer grade as a first step towards Natfhe's long standing aspiration of pay parity between staff working on degree level work on both sides of the binary line.

Promotion blockages are another way in which the public sector falls behind the universities. There are proportionally twice as many senior research and teaching posts in the universities as in the colleges.

According to the APT, 36 per cent of university academics are above the basic lecturer scale, compared with just 24 per cent above the L2/S1 scale in the polytechnics, while some 13 per cent of university staff are at professional level as against only 4.6 per cent on the public sector head of department scales.

As a result, again according to the APT, the public sector is not able to compete with the universities or with outside professions for the best staff.

APT might have added, in its list of disincentives, the limited research opportunities in the public sector. Only a tiny fraction of research council funds and studentships go to the polytechnics in comparison with the universities - and the cuts will have done little to help public sector institutions build up their research capabilities.

Failure to pursue vigorously the L1/L2 claim will lay Natfhe's negotiators open to criticism for flouting the will of the special conference, but to play down parity would add further weight to the allegation perennially paraded by the non-TUC Association of Polytechnic

Teachers that Natfhe is not concerned about polytechnic salaries because the overwhelming bulk of its members teach in the further education colleges.

The principle of broad comparability between the university and public sector higher education salaries was established by the Houghton committee in 1974, accepted by both unions and local authority management, but its full implementation thwarted by successive pay policies.

The cash limit "incomes policy that never was" of the past two years and the inclusion of a small flat rate element in last year's public sector settlement has reduced the gap - not enough for Natfhe or the APT but too much for the comfort of the Association of University Teachers.

It calculates that a 3 per cent increase in current salaries is needed to restore the lead which university lecturers at the top of the lecturer scale enjoyed over further education staff at the top of the senior lecturer scale - one of the traditional points of comparison.

The AUT says in a document produced as background to establishing its 1983 claim: "It has been generally accepted that our pay, relative to further education teachers' pay, should reflect the greater amount of degree work undertaken by university teachers, and above all, should reflect our contractual obligation to do research as one of the major functions of university academics."

Comparisons of last year's settlements disclose a considerable advantage still attaching to university salaries despite the effects of cash limits.

At the same point at which the AUT says 3 per cent is needed to restore differentials, the university lecturer has a 5.4 per cent lead over

his polytechnic counterpart, April 1982 salaries were £12,816 in the public sector against £13,505 in universities.

Further up the promotion ladder the gap widens still further. A polytechnic principal lecturer earns £15,018 against £18,180 for a senior lecturer at the top of the university scale (advantage 7.7 per cent) a university professor (average £19,414) has a lead of nearly 11 per cent over his nearest public sector counterpart, the head of a large department (maximum salary £17,490).

The APT is also claiming that "productivity" in the polytechnics has increased sharply in the past year. While student numbers rose by 5.9 per cent over 1981/82, staff numbers fell by 3.4 per cent - an effective increase in student-staff ratios of 9.5 per cent.

The equivalent increase since Clegg is 14.8 per cent, and APT calculates that the figure for the three years up to April this year is likely to be the order of 25 per cent.

This contrasts, APT says, with the picture in the universities, where the reduction in funding and staff has been "matched" by a decrease in student numbers.

At the very time the public sector is increasingly keen on getting to grips with the parity issue, the AUT is likely to be giving close attention to distributing anything it is able to extract from the vice chancellors to aid its lower-paid members.

It is likely to come up against the full stone wall of the 3.5 per cent cash limit, for unlike the colleges universities have restricted alternative sources of income.

Again the parameters are likely to be set by the local government manual workers but with the example of the health service workers before them, the chances of a full scale confrontation is significantly smaller than it was a year ago.

Drill for a young member of a village self-defence force near Saigon during the Vietnam war

DECEMBER

BOOKS

A woman's voice

Nisa: the life and words of a Kung woman
by Marjorie Shostak
Allen Lane, £12.95
ISBN 0 7139 1486 6

The life-history of a woman from the Kalahari desert, whose people (formerly known as the Bushmen) subsist largely on gathering and hunting, seems at first sight an obscure subject, and yet this book has enormous popular appeal. It is the narrative of a feminist project but to give women a voice, and to reiterate personal experience into the objectifying language of sociology. Studies like this help, additionally, to shed light on the lives of early nomadic peoples who have left nothing but archaeological traces, and also to undermine the ever-popular myth of "Man the Hunter" as the only human ancestor worthy of mention.

But it is other qualities which will delight many readers. Nisa, the Kung woman who tells her story, speaks across many cultural frontiers, through all the translations and transcriptions and contextualizations that are sensitively provided by her "niece", the anthropologist Marjorie Shostak, and she speaks with great style and a voice that is truly her own. In the words of Richard Lee, who has written the most comprehensive ethnography of the Kung, their vocabulary is one of "rough humour, backhanded compliments, put-downs, and darning with faint praise". This abrasive edge, so important an element of Kung egalitarianism, is admirably transmitted by Shostak. But though this helps to distance us from her, it is impossible not to be struck by how immediate and comprehensible Nisa's narrative is. Many of the dilemmas and the emotions that she describes so creatively are ones that an urban European can easily identify with.

In part this is due to Nisa's own gifts as a storyteller, and to the literary skills of the anthropologist, who manages to combine a sense of the dramatic with conveying a great deal of information about the Kung in a clear and accessible form, and in addition has been able to incorporate research in Botswana, and her quite ambivalent relationship with Nisa herself, in a way that is not confessional but an integral part of the book.

In part also it is due to the subject-matter. Shostak, influenced by the early preoccupations of the women's movement, wished to study and to communicate the life-experience of women whose world is in its material conditions so radically opposed to our own. Nisa talks about the experience of childhood and adolescence, first menstruation, childbirth, menopause, dreams, sexuality, thoughts about death. This makes utterly absorbing reading, and it seems churlish to dwell on the absences, but it is surprising given the intimacy of Nisa's story how little talk there is of her children. With the detailed attention given to the "work" of making love, and to fool, this seems like a distortion. If it is not, we should be told why there is so little to say about one's children (though one suspects that it is in mentioning women only in their roles as child-bearers and rearers).

There is neither more complex absence, which arises from the limits of the anthropologist herself, nor understandable that she should wish to draw attention to the dimensions of life - and of women's lives in particular - that are rarely discussed. However, while this is done partly to bring women into a picture largely dominated by the doings of men, it is hard to think of a life-history or autobiography of a man that gives emphasis to the personal. Would a Kung man have made the same emphases in his life-story, or would he have given more weight to the dramatic history of the last twenty-

years? Would Nisa herself have said more on this subject if invited to do so? Shostak summarizes the history for the reader, but since Nisa's story is rather timeless, we are left with a Laurence van der Post-style afterglow. At various levels it is not clear how we should read the book. Marjorie Shostak herself has doubts over some parts of Nisa's narrative and how to understand them. While it portrays Kung women as anything but pawns of their menfolk, Nisa is also clearly an exceptional woman. These are issues for every biography, and yet in the end the life becomes its own justification. At times we think easily of the universality of the human condition, she comes back to us with an abrasive humour that reminds us of the worlds that separate us.

Olivia Harris

Olivia Harris is lecturer in social anthropology at Goldsmiths' College, University of London.

Equal shares

Disadvantage and Education
by Jo Millmore and Tessa Blackstone
Harcourt Educational, £12.50 and £5.95
ISBN 0 435 82608 5 and 82609 3
Educational Policy and Educational Inequality
by Paul Lorge and Tessa Blackstone
Martin Robertson, £16.00
ISBN 0 85520 192 4

Since the war various British governments have paid lip-service to ideals of greater educational equality, yet education now exhibits some of the most dramatic inequalities in expenditure of any of the social services. The expanded university sector has been colonized by the middle class, while 61 per cent of school leavers, mainly working class, get no full or part-time education. In different ways these two books approach the question of why there is not greater educational equality today.

Disadvantage and Education, a spin-off from the DHSS/SSRC Transmitted Deprivation Programme, reviews the literature to find out what we know of the extent and causes of educational disadvantage and the possibilities of success through intervention programmes. Unfortunately, the mass of research remains patchy and disjointed, a number of fragments of different jigsaws.

Rapid changes of fashion in sociological theory have left little mark on the largest studies of educational disadvantage, which tend to be generated by demographers, epidemiologists, psychologists or statisticians. The basic set of problems remains how to conceptualize and capture through research the complex social and societal processes involving "the family", "social class" and "schooling", which most studies merely reduce to proxy computable individualized "factors". Nevertheless, there is ample evidence why they have been "long on rhetoric, and short on coherent, positive, purposeful action", and outside the mainstream of education policy.

Why has so little been done? Taking a more radical stance than the DHSS/SSRC review could perhaps require that the best of educational inequality shifts from the soft version of equality (compensating for disadvantage) to the hard stuff of redistribution of educational resources. From published sources, the authors put together for the non-specialist an analysis of policy-makers (the DES officials and two pressure groups, the National Union of Teachers and the Campaign for Advancement of State Education) in relation to policy-making on nursery education, positive discrimination (again), 11-plus selection, the raising of the school leaving age, and post-school education. They conclude unequivocally that in all these areas "our failure is not simply a failure of knowledge, it is a failure of political will. We have not forged a political basis for acting against inequality."

Since the war, for the Conservatives and the Treasury, tolerance of modest educational reform has been the price of avoiding more radical state intervention in the redistribution of income and wealth, in economic planning, or in "throwing money down the sink with Sir William Beveridge". In the wartime Green Book, Ministry of Education officials sketched out their model for a segregated system of education, which MPs were not even supposed to comment upon. Subsequently short-stay ministers have been totally dominated by long-lasting civil servants like Sir William Pile: mistrusting educational research and planning, he and his officials have preferred "going where the arithmetic leads... we have no systematic view but the 'feel' [for education] is a very important bit of our trade". His feel for state education led him to send his own children to public schools. The DES - by secrecy, selective consultation with only a limited range of opinion, an emphasis on the managerial questions of putting "roofs over heads" in new suburban developments and meeting middle-class demands for the expansion of secondary and higher educational opportunities - has manufactured a consensus and maintained the fiction that educational administration is non-political, not a fit area for MPs' interference.

As the authors put it, "It is not a scandal that civil servants make such choices. What is a scandal is that we tolerate the claim that they do not make policy, thus obviating the need to create contexts in which this activity can be rendered accountable." But who is "we" in this sentence? Curiously the authors do not engage in the ritual berating of the Labour Party, although there is ample evidence of political pussy-footing by Wilson and others at vital stages of policies such as comprehensive reorganization.

Dennis Marsden

Dennis Marsden is reader in sociology at the University of Essex.

Beating the system

Capitalist Democracy In Britain
by Ralph Milliband
Oxford University Press, £8.95
ISBN 0 19 827445 9

Ralph Milliband's book is an essay on the nature of British democracy, written from a Marxist perspective. Such a perspective has frequently been employed in many other social sciences and on particular aspects of British politics, but not on the political system per se. Milliband is right to comment on the predominantly politically "centrist" and, until recently, bland textbook treatments of the British political system. Nowadays, the texts on "the model stable democracy" are being hastily rewritten in light of the symptoms of "the British crisis". Advocates of both approaches should welcome Milliband's "alternative prospectus" or anti-textbook.

His thesis is easily summarized. He claims that the British political system is a means for containing pressures from below, particularly from the voters and organized labour. There are democratic institutions and procedures but capitalism requires that they be qualified and weakened in practice. The elites and the institutions have managed for more than a century to ward off and mitigate the political repercussions of class conflict. Parliament is a buffer between the people and government and moderates the demands and pressures from the former. Trade unions and the Labour Party, partly by organizing working-class demands, partly by negotiating and bargaining, and partly by acting "responsibly" have "tamed" the pressures. Finally, the courts, House of Lords, monarchy and mass media - "the Establishment" - have peddled a selective view of the national interest and legitimated the dominant order and status quo.

Now the argument that capitalist democracy transmutes and deracinal-

izes working-class pressures is, with respect, very familiar. The many admirers of Milliband's earlier books on *Parliamentary Socialism* and *The State in Capitalist Society* (1973) may even find it rather stale. Many of the points in *Capitalist Democracy* have a tired, *ditto* or quality about them. Recent studies by Samuel Hays and Keith Middlemas, both written from a different political perspective from Milliband and presenting a synoptic view of British politics, argue that the process of containment has broken down. Given the author's earlier claims that the system is undergoing a crisis (that, indeed, he regards crisis as almost synonymous with British capitalism), it is surprising that he and his officials have preferred "going where the arithmetic leads... we have no systematic view but the 'feel' [for education] is a very important bit of our trade". His feel for state education led him to send his own children to public schools. The DES - by secrecy, selective consultation with only a limited range of opinion, an emphasis on the managerial questions of putting "roofs over heads" in new suburban developments and meeting middle-class demands for the expansion of secondary and higher educational opportunities - has manufactured a consensus and maintained the fiction that educational administration is non-political, not a fit area for MPs' interference.

As the authors put it, "It is not a scandal that civil servants make such choices. What is a scandal is that we tolerate the claim that they do not make policy, thus obviating the need to create contexts in which this activity can be rendered accountable." But who is "we" in this sentence? Curiously the authors do not engage in the ritual berating of the Labour Party, although there is ample evidence of political pussy-footing by Wilson and others at vital stages of policies such as comprehensive reorganization.

This is a pity. In diverse but relevant areas, the works of Colin Crouch, John Dearlove, Patrick Dunleavy, John Goldthorpe, Bob Jessop and Middlemas, among others, are sensitive to the more manifest conflicts in the British political system. Moreover, much recent interesting and relevant work on electoral sociology, political economy and the international context of British politics are not drawn on.

Milliband is not drawn on in discussing the sources of political legitimacy (including his references to manipulation, the failures and shortcomings of Labour and the unions, the absence of a perceived alternative, and Labour's failure to present itself as an anti-hegemonic force). We may continue in this vein, speculating about the great unwashed, the failure of the British working class to act as a revolutionary force, or at least be more radical. But, can one manipulate all of the people, all of the time? Surely some legitimacy of the political order (and the social and economic groups associated with it) lies in its performance over many decades. Compared to what has been on offer in most other states in the twentieth century, do we need to make so much of manipulation by the elite, or false consciousness?

The final chapter provides a brief discussion of possible political developments. A continuation of present trends is possible. But can capitalist democracy, and the order it protects, survive the gathering relative economic decline? Repression by an authoritarian conservative regime is another possible development. A third scenario is that a radical left-wing Labour party takes power. The last paragraph of the book makes clear the author's ambiguity about this, his desired "scenario". Change can only come from the political left, yet the Labour Party, he argues, lacks the commitment to be the vehicle for such a transformation.

Too many texts on British politics lack both a theoretical orientation and a willingness to relate the political institutions to the social order and the mutual support and tensions between them. Milliband's book, though falling short of his earlier high standards, is a useful corrective.

Dennis Kavanagh

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Forgiving

Confessions: studies in defiance and religion
by Mike Hepworth and Bryan S. Turner
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £9.95
ISBN 0 7100 0198 2

"Confession", when the word simultaneously alludes to the confessions of murder and to institutionalized confession in the Roman Church, may not appear at first sight to constitute a unitary social phenomenon. That these types of confession relate, in a fundamentally similar way, to social organization is the central thrust of this seminal and instructive (if at times somewhat repetitive) study.

Reversing an expectable order of priorities, the authors insist that their question is not, "Why do people confess?" but rather, "How is it that they can remain silent?", since the social functions which confession fulfils are of real significance both for the confessor and for the wider society to the representatives of which his confession is made.

Quickly transcending the obvious function of confession as an agency of social control, the authors emphasize that confession is always regarded as a voluntary admission to the appropriate agents of society. A confession is not only an admission of guilt, it is a recognition of the concept of guilt and of the right of the authorities to define misdeeds and remorse. Authority is the values of society. The reward for confessing - the element of forgiveness which it induces - reinforces the rightness of the prevailing order. Confession, as the authors emphasize, is part of the ritual of inclusion.

Whereas levinity theory conceives heavily on the effects of negative labelling in excluding those deflected from society, the act of confession is the first step to rehabilitation. The law may certainly degrade and stigmatize the deviant, but this is only half the story: the techniques of social restoration matter too. The confessed man can expect, perhaps after specified punishment or penance, to take his place in society once again. Society controls not only by expelling, but also by forgiving, and in particular by forgiving those who voluntarily confess - confess, that is, not only to their own failings, but implicitly also to the rightness of social norms and mores.

Confession is related to social structures, and the authors make brief but deft comparative excursions into the attitudes towards evil in the various world religions. At greater length, they trace the institution in the Roman Church, noting differences between, for example, Jesuits and Jesuits in their attitudes to sin and confession. Clearly, confession was not simply an ideologically imposed institution; its character changed as society changed - not least by the impetus given to interior conscience for personal responsibility that occurred with the emergence of a market economy, and one would have welcomed a more extended analysis of its changing social functions in the context of the shifting balance of dependence on intense childhood socialization in the early industrial era.

The authors' concern is to cast doubt on arguments that confession responds to a universal need. Reasonably enough, they conclude that the institution of confession and the culture of guilt may produce the need to confess, rather than the need producing the institution. Private confession as found in the Christian church is a culturally unique phenomenon. The confessor's catharsis is not a universal psychic response; it cannot be understood without relating it to the wider social structure.

Although the authors emphasize confession as a ritual of inclusion, they do not ignore its use as an agency of repression. Thus it is that the conditions under which a confession is elicited becomes a subject that is so important in western legal procedure.

Bryan Wilson

Bryan Wilson is a fellow of All Souls, Oxford.

BOOKS

Esprit de finesse

Critical Questions: an music and letters, culture and biography 1940-1980
by Jacques Barzun
Selected, edited and introduced by Bea Friedlund
University of Chicago Press, £14.00
ISBN 0 226 03803 7

The writing of Jacques Barzun represents a peculiar form of intellectual personality and procedure which needs careful definition, particularly because of its deceptive mildness and unbuttoned ease.

Barzun calls himself a "cultural historian", and he belongs to a tradition of letters which has lost its academic authority over the last thirty-odd years to the more rigorous and logically based disciplines of sociology, linguistics, and psychoanalysis. Barzun talks uninhibitedly of society, of art, of cultural movements, and the need for the historian-critic to have perception, empathy, imagination, and common sense - without also terms which beg a whole series of anterior questions. But then, his aim is to communicate not with the fellow-scholar, but with a broad "educated" public whose interests are (in the purest sense of the word) amateur rather than professional. His writing mediates the technical and difficult, popularizing without vulgarizing, carefully weaving a liberal path between all ideologies, and rejecting all attempts to make scientific the discourse of the humanities.

The range of Barzun's preoccupations is wide - he has written books on race, English grammar, the detective novel, the American educational system, political philosophy, and his autobiography. In his long career at New York's Columbia University he taught (like many with his close friend Lionel Trilling) a "great books" course which aimed to introduce deprived American undergraduates to the major texts of classical and European culture - and it is the patient and lucid pedagogic tone from that course which shines through his style and content. "The critic's ultimate hope", he writes, "is that he may facilitate the beholder's pleasure by illuminating its kind and by associating it with tenable meanings, emotions, and experiences."

In this collection of essays, most of the space is given over to music, and predominantly to Berlioz, the figure around whom Barzun constructed his most substantial work, *Berlioz and the Romantic Century*, a panoramic picture of mid nineteenth-century France with the composer as its presiding genius. (The book played a considerable part in the rehabilitation of Berlioz as a composer as well as a pianist, and so on), but not much more. Barzun's assessment of Berlioz has not altered in the light of the current revival in his status.

Much more central is Barzun's interest in the problem of "meaning" in music, and the nature of its expressiveness. But here the profound flows in Barzun's approach begin to emerge. The subject is a large one, which most members of the educated public will at some time have pondered, but Barzun doesn't do any more than glide smoothly over the surface of the question. There are plenty of comforting moments - "music is a medium through which certain unnamable experiences of life are exquisitely conveyed through equivalent sensations for the ear" - but typical of them, but nowhere does Barzun actually grapple with anything to the point of stretching the educated public beyond its ordinary level of response. He neatly and logically articulates our own commonplace thoughts - all very well, but only up to a very limited point. The same applies to the other theme of this collection, the defence

of "cultural history": who could possibly attack such a humble and accommodating statement of the position as this?

The cultural historian, in other words, must steer a middle course between total description... and circumscribed narrative. The cultural historian selects his material not by fixed rule but by *esprit de finesse*... The historian in general can only show, not prove; persuade, not convince... the cultural historian lives imaginatively in his own culture and also in that which he has made his own by study...

"Middle course", *esprit de finesse*, "only show, not prove", "lives imaginatively" - this vocabulary melts into a soft and slippery jelly which goes down very nicely at an end-of-term fund-raising appeal/annual memorial lecture. When Barzun claims that as a cultural critic and historian he is not in the business of "solving riddles" but of "grasping meanings", he is in effect disavowing the validity of everything he states. What are these "grasped meanings"? How can one be educated into this *esprit de finesse*, and who is to say (except Barzun himself) that Barzun has it?

It might seem unfair to raise these philosophical matters over a book which has such a pleasant demeanour and is often soundly informative. Barzun is at his best when imparting facts or explaining other people's arguments. Yet his own ideology (for that is what his *esprit de finesse* amounts to) is insidiously unaware of its own limitations and fallacies. It does not confront itself. But less toughly, one might say that one's image of Barzun is thoroughly sedentary. He is not a critic in the wider sense, a prophet crying out, like Lawrence or Leavis, against the modern dispensation. Rather, friendly and courteous, he has mastered the critic's equivalent of a good bedside manner.

Rupert Christiansen

Rupert Christiansen has worked on the new "Oxford Companion of Music".

Novels of good form

The Formal Principle in the Novel
by Austin M. Wright
Cornell University Press, £15.00
ISBN 0 8014 1462 8

The idea that a good work of fiction should possess formal unity was once generally accepted; more recently, however, many critics have dismissed it as an obsolete notion, an impediment to a proper understanding of the nature of literature. In this book, Austin Wright begins by reasserting its value and then examining it in theoretical terms.

There are, he argues, four components of defining form in the novel, which he labels as narrative, character, theme, and hierarchy. The novel, he argues, is a hierarchy of all the elements that contribute to its unity, arranged them in order of importance, and then placed at the top of the hierarchy the unifying principle unique to that work.

Working with this concept of hierarchy, Wright then goes on to construct a more detailed definition of artistic form. His argument is fairly elaborate, but his basic point is simple. Every good novel, which has its own formal composite formed by a hypothetical unity of elements - or, to put it another way, by a unity of elements which are themselves unified by a unity of elements - is the study of the plot; plot is the synthesizing principle in a work of fiction, and for any novel that possesses a unity a proposed plot-hypothesis is adequate if it is able to account for all that novel's aspects. For example, by proposing that the plot of *Heart of Darkness* is "the process by which the protagonist discovers with horror (or dread) the 'precariousness' of civilization", we



This black chalk drawing of the head of a young man is attributed to Gaetano Gandolfi c1780. An illustration from the catalogue of an exhibition of Bologna drawings (University of Chicago Press, £24.50).

can perceive the unity of the story, see why certain things are excluded and certain others emphasized, and discover the reasons for its particular structure.

Having emphasized the centrality of plot, Wright then analyses four novels in detail: *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Sound and the Fury*, *Invisible Man*, and *Pale Fire*. His intention here is to show how his idea of a formal principle can be applied to very different kinds of novels and, in particular, to experimental fiction. On the whole, Wright deals with his chosen texts rather well. His analyses of their structures are exemplary, exact without being too reductive; and he comes to terms quite convincingly with such basic critical questions as the function of the closing episode in *The Portrait of a Lady* and the relationship of the final section of *The Sound and the Fury* to the three others.

This is not to say, however, that the book has no weaknesses. Quite often, Wright's theoretical apparatus seems to be more of a hindrance than a help, leading him to multiply categories to the point of confusion and to define individual novels in extraordinarily cumbersome terms. Then again, he appears to retreat occasionally into mere impressionism or an appeal to some hypothetical notion of the common reader's experience: as when, for example, he rejects the suggestion that Isabel Archer may be sexually motivated because it "strikes" him, he says, as "anti-Jamesian".

More important, perhaps, Wright's reluctance to deal with the argument that the essence of a literary work is its disunity, or with the currently fashionable tendency to dismiss consideration of the author's intentions, leads him into some serious difficulties. It encourages him, for instance, to minimize the diversity, the sheer disruptiveness and discontinuity, of books like *The Sound and the Fury*, and to assume that if an author says something is so about his work then "we have really all we need to know".

But to dwell on such weaknesses would be misleading. Wright may not solve all the problems he sets out to examine, but nevertheless he states them clearly and pursues them conscientiously. Any reader is likely to feel, after finishing this book, that his knowledge of the basic critical questions has been extended and that he has been given a few, new and useful, tools for understanding fiction; which is surely all that can be asked of a work of this kind.

Richard Gray

Richard Gray is reader in literature at the University of Essex.

Exile and exception

Notebooks/Memoirs/Archives: reading and rereading Doris Lessing
edited by Jenny Taylor
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £11.95 and £4.95
ISBN 0 7100 9033 1 and 0 7100 9034 X

"This story is difficult to tell," announces the narrator at the beginning of one of Doris Lessing's short stories, unsettling the reader by drawing attention to problems of form: "Where to put the emphasis? Whose perspective to use? The solution, as so often in Lessing's work, turns out to involve discovering the possibility of using the character's points of view; instead, the narrative is presented through an omniscient but somehow fretful commentator."

The result is a type of detachment, frequently ironic in tone, which is one aspect of Lessing's determination to "break through the personal, the subjective". In view of this aim, it is not surprising that Lessing was irritated when large numbers of women in the 1960s read her novel *The Golden Notebook* very subjectively indeed. Now, twenty years later, the contributors to *Notebooks/Memoirs/Archives* have set out to examine the reality behind the popular notion of Lessing as a kind of sage.

Although all of the essays in this collection are by women with feminist convictions, they vary considerably in method and approach. Sometimes, the emphasis is on individual testimony. Jean McCrindle rediscovers the impact of reading Lessing in the aftermath of 1956, and still reveres the content with "fragmenting and getting beyond it" that made Lessing's writing so helpful to her then, politically as well as emotionally.

Elizabeth Wilson, in a piece on Lessing and de Beauvoir, also looks back to a time when *The Golden Notebook* seemed like "a manual of womanly experience", but for her, rereading these "heroine-autobiographies" has brought nostalgic awareness of a "lost ability to identify with them as 'heroiners and Wilson concludes that when 'exemplars' were needed in the 1950s and early 1960s, de Beauvoir and Lessing kindly obliged, but that today, when feminists are 'returning to individual lived experience', both these 'pioneers' seem 'stuck in one-sided representations of womanhood', unable to resolve

an ambiguity between "the unique and the representative voice". Wilson does not claim, however, that contemporary feminists have overcome this dilemma, and her cautious approach is fully justified if Nicole Ward Jouve's contribution is anything to go by. With many worthwhile points to make about Lessing's prose and its disaffections, Jouve spoils things by trying to interest us in the drama of her own thought processes - indicated mainly by colloquial interjections, anecdotal "musings", and other gimmicks designed to avoid any suspicion that she is behaving as critics usually choose to do. Take away the song and dance about "the right to say I" and the misplaced assumption that all literary criticism (or "criticism") as she deservingly spells it is doomed to evasive anonymity, and Jouve actually has a strong case to make against Lessing's seemingly complete authorial consciousness in *The Children of Violence*.

The conflict discerned by Jouve between Lessing's "totalizing intention" and her apparent preoccupation with details and particularities is a recurrent topic throughout this collection. In a fascinating study of the different "selves" produced by the narrative structure of stories included in *A Man and Two Women*, Margaret Atack reveals an "irreducible difference between the established discourse" of the book and "the immediate experience which should and cannot be accommodated within it", and Jenny Taylor, in her editorial introduction, notes a widening gap between Lessing's all-knowing narrative persona and the consciousness of her protagonists.

Fry Taylor, the formal intricacy of Lessing's fiction cannot be understood apart from ideological questions, and she offers a convincing account of the way Lessing's early adherence to the tradition of classic literary realism is linked to contradictions in her political stance, particularly as it was affected by the intense debates within the Left during the 1950s. Here, Lessing's colonial origins are seen as a "token woman" contributing to the authority she gained "to speak with both a 'public' and a 'personal' voice", and to dissociate herself from the passivity which characterized postwar British views of women.

Clearly, Lessing's position has had advantages, and these are explored fully in Rebecca O'Rourke's discussion of Lessing as "exile and exception". Opposing the misconception of women's writing as a unified whole, and so offering a welcome alternative to "laudatory feminist criticism", O'Rourke manages to acknowledge the variety of modes and sub-genres in which women have displayed their abilities as writers of fiction. It is suggested that because Lessing enters into "a critical relation with the dominant culture", and conducts more "skirmishes with form" than her British counterparts, she has won serious critical attention. This might seem a laudable achievement, but O'Rourke sees it as tantamount to becoming "a token woman for the literary establishment". The implication seems to be that Lessing has also been overruled - or at least valued for suspect reasons.

Collectively, as well as individually, these essays leave a strong impression of the constraints within which Lessing's career has developed, and also of something oppressive about her didacticism, which is shown to be at odds with her increasing experimentation with open forms like science fiction.

A fitting end to an interview with David Gladwell, who directed the film version of Lessing's futuristic fantasy *The Memoirs of a Survivor*. Constraints in this case included the need for a location which could be kept free of cars, and where borough councils would tolerate windswept drifts of rubbish; but these were minor problems compared with the financial guarantees of the film industry, no "voice-over effect". The story had to tell itself, and keep secret the difficulties of the teller.

Valerie Shaw

Dr Shaw is lecturer in English at the University of Edinburgh.

REMINDER

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February 4	March 4
English	European Studies
February 11	March 11
Education	Sociology
February 18	March 18
Biological sciences	Maths & Physics
February 25	March 25
Economics	History

Don's diary

Sunday

Mansfield. Little to recommend it except the presence of the young theatre director in charge of drama at the annual St Endellion festival of music and drama in Cornwall. After playing major roles there for two summers, I have agreed to become the (unpaid) administrator of the theatre company. A day's discussion of plans for 1983's *As You Like It*. We complete preliminary casting suggestions except for the key role of Orlando, which remains problematic. A nationwide travel has so far produced no one suitable. The day is enlivened by a Chinese meal in Mansfield.

Monday

Three hours' teaching at a local further education college. One of the joys of redundancy is that there is time to teach, and to prepare adequately for one's classes. This is more rewarding than the endless committee work and response to crises which has been my lot for the last 11 years. These are a level theatre studies students could hardly be described as "academic" but they are enthusiastically lively, endlessly inventive, verbally witty, and skilled in practical drama. However, they are less responsive to the charms of the Tudor interlude - our task this morning.

The afternoon is devoted to correspondence offering parts in *As You Like It* to 16 people geographically spread from Glasgow to Redruth and from Nottingham to Middlesbrough. Then to the university to attend the fifth out of six lectures on "Diversity in human sexual experience" arranged for the extra-mural department by a teachers' group to which I belong. After a lecture on student counselling, the 30 participants decide to have a party next week to celebrate the end of this course and the new friendships made therein. Generously, I offer my house as venue. Initial plans are discussed in the Cambridge pub. I notice as I leave that students who fail their Liverpool degree can obtain a PhD (Cambridge) from this hostelry - Pils-heads Diploma.

Tuesday

Return to the university to teach postgraduates in the education department. I've answered a *cri de coeur* to inject some practical drama for schools into the course for English graduates training as teachers. A delightful group who quickly catch on to ideas but who are somewhat stiff and inhibited in practical work. I muse on the contrast with my A level students.

In the afternoon, back to the FE college to teach Stanislavsky's psycho-technique system of acting to second-year A level aspirants. Much hilarity as we practise one of the concentration exercises in which a student tries to carry a saucer brimful of water round the room while the rest of the group try to distract him. The resulting wet floor will not endear me to the cleaners! Then an hour with LGSN students hearing and evaluating their presentations of programmes of verse and prose on the theme of love.

Go home, to find that at last, after three seemingly interminable weeks, the decorators have left; they were concerned only with the exterior and with light, landing and stairs, but every room seems to have succumbed to partial chaos. Spend the early part of the evening tidying up, but wonder whether I am wasting my time in view of next week's party. A group of former colleagues take me out for a drink, and I feel great relief at being no longer directly embroiled in their testing world of crises, financial cutbacks, staff redundancies, meetings, course closures.

Wednesday

No part-time teaching today, so devote the morning to the composition of letters about *As You Like It* to sound, lighting and costume firms, to Richard Hickox (the festival's musical director), to the festival accommodation officer and to the National Trust, at three of whose properties we shall be performing after the festival. Ring round the country in search of an Orlando, but without success.

In the afternoon, tackle Salma Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. How wonderful to have time to read again! Am impressed by the subtleties of structure, the imaginative inventiveness of a plot embedded in historical events, and the galaxy of vivid characters. Break off, somewhat reluctantly, to attend the National Theatre's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* - beautifully staged, immaculately acted, but almost inaudible in the vast, echoing mausoleum of Liverpool's Empire Theatre.

Thursday

Begin to prepare a lecture on "Language across the curriculum" to be delivered next month to a group of FE teachers. Then prepare for next week's classes. At last, hear from the pensioners' branch that my three years' service in Scotland will be "reckonable" for my pension and that a cheque will shortly be on its way to me. An unexpected phone call reveals the strong possibility that an Orlando is in sight - indeed, there may even be two or three candidates, so that auditions may be required. A productive day!

In the evening, meet friends in a beautifully relaxed "committee meeting" in a wine bar. On the agenda: planning details for next week's party.

Friday

Another two hours at the university education department. This time I'm teaching a group of postgraduates whose major subjects are modern languages, physics, biology, mathematics and history. They have selected an option in drama for schools. Together we do practical work in improvisation before discussing the ways in which their role as drama teacher will differ from their role when teaching their main discipline. They seem to relish the practical work as a change from the predominantly sedentary nature of the rest of their week.

Afternoon brings shopping and cooking in preparation for the arrival of an old friend. Made redundant two years ago from his post as managing director of a clothes manufacturing firm, he has capitalized on a life-long love of cooking by opening a cordon bleu restaurant in Wales. Made every effort to provide a cuisine worthy of his own standards but (predictably) feel that I've failed.

Saturday

Up early to catch the 7am London train. Four secondhand bookshops in the rest of the group try to distract me to the cleaners! Then an hour with LGSN students hearing and evaluating their presentations of programmes of verse and prose on the theme of love.

Go home, to find that at last, after three seemingly interminable weeks, the decorators have left; they were concerned only with the exterior and with light, landing and stairs, but every room seems to have succumbed to partial chaos. Spend the early part of the evening tidying up, but wonder whether I am wasting my time in view of next week's party. A group of former colleagues take me out for a drink, and I feel great relief at being no longer directly embroiled in their testing world of crises, financial cutbacks, staff redundancies, meetings, course closures.

David Rostron

I heard a story a few months ago of a well-known prostitute who had just gone on a retreat to a Greek island and come back pregnant by a Greek monk. That outline, I appreciate, sounds like the start of a good story and one day I will follow it up. But for the moment my readers will have to remain in suspense because what fascinates me about the story is not so much the situation of the prostitute as that of the monk. I don't understand why the girl was so overcome by him. But then I have never understood women either, thank heaven.

The matter of the monk makes me think, in a general and not very serious way, about the clergy. Having been brought up in a family much influenced by Irish Catholicism by a father making stained glass windows mainly for Anglican churches, and having been educated at a Catholic boarding school run by the Institute of Charity, I have always known a lot of clergy, of many different denominations. And a remarkable lot they are.

It happened that among my contemporaries at school were a number who, noted for their piety and determination, decided to join the order when they left school. For a time it seemed like becoming a fashion. I even went to see the spiritual director and said I thought I ought to become a priest.

"Oh," he said with a faint note of suspicion in his voice, "You want to be a priest, do you?"

"Not at all," I replied, "I can't imagine anything more dreadful; I just feel that I am being called to the priesthood."

"Well, here's another call for you," he more or less said, "You can get out, I never heard anything more ridiculous."

What has brought the subject of clergy to my mind was the petition recently presented to Parliament seeking the repeal of the House of Commons (Clergy Disqualification) Act of 1801. It seems that the Archbishop of Canterbury is content that his clergy should continue to be disqualified, along with felons, lunatics and peers, and I suspect that a lot of people may agree with him. There was of course never a good reason for disqualifying them in the first place - simply a determination to exclude a troublesome priest called Tooke who wanted to reform Parliament, which was a sure sign of lack

All for the love of mankind



Patrick Nuttgens

of balance. There is no evidence that I know of that the House of Commons was any better after 1801 without clergymen than it had been before. What ultimately began to sort it out was not the absence of clergy but the extension of the franchise.

The absurd thing about the situation today is that it is only the priests of the established church who are excluded. Clergy who invent their own religions or churches are eligible. A modification of the act to exclude people like Ian Paisley could only be for the good. Even better if they were excluded from churches too.

The real reason, I sometimes think, why the clergy should be excluded from government is that they are so uncharitable. That is not as odd as it may sound. Most professions suffer from the vices they are themselves attacking - like academics who deplore intellectual dishonesty. If you believe you are in the right it is only a small step to believing that everyone else must be in the wrong and should eventually be put down. In any case the clergy are notorious for being quarrelsome. Their record in history is not good - Kielevich, Mazzini, John Knox, Cromwell, Rasputin, the Ayatollah Khomeini, thoughtless Cranmer so deplorable that I remember rightly, he wrote that his very existence would almost make you doubt the justice of God

A renewed sense of purpose?



Keith Hampson

My friendly neighbourhood ecology candidate has been spending Christmas paying for advertisements telling my constituents that I support nuclear weapons.

You might surmise from this that the new generation of Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has more money than sense. Its supporters certainly seem to be well heeled, fully paid up members of the middle class. They are also predominantly middle aged. They strike me as a different breed from the mark one vintage. They are not so young and their strength is not based in the universities.

I opposed CND as a student in the 1960s as I oppose them now. They were wrong about Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis and I happen to

think that their judgment is no better today. But the point I want to make is not the similarity of them and now but the difference in the participants. What I suspect is that the 31-year-olds who are in the vanguard of the present peace movement here and in the United States are actually the product of the campus revolt of a decade ago.

The young people who were so strongly influenced by Vietnam - the "flower power" generation who spread a ferocious radicalism from Berkeley to Essex - have not faded away. They are reborn. Despite the maxim about conservatism coming with increasing age, their old spirit seems to have been rekindled.

The ingredients are much the same. The old idealism - only slighter has been widened from peace in Vietnam to peace in general. There is the same anti-establishment, anti-military and in a sense anti-industry feeling. Attitudes which in this counterculture and large to a rabid anti-Americanism. But the protestors of the late 1960s and early 1970s, like those of today, never had anything very positive to put forward. They prefer to opt out. Today their optimism is just as misplaced, their expectations of the Soviet Union naive and their unilateralist solution a useless panacea.

Be that as it may, I am forever being told what a contrast the present generation of students is: so industrious but so much more conservative and politically apathetic. They had been cowed by harsh economic realities, so the argument usually goes. But what seems more likely is that the present generation is the norm and that of the late 1960s and early 1970s an aberration. As far as opinion polls have looked at the attitudes of young people, they show that their attitudes, except for Vietnam generation, match closely those

were it not that "the most despicable man expired at last amidst those flames that he himself had been the chief cause of kindling." I suppose devotion to absolute truth can make you regard human lives as relatively cheap, your own and especially other people's.

The problem is that while the best of the clergy are preaching the wonders and glory of God, some of the colleagues are giving him a bad name. God may be in Woody Allen's opinion, a underachiever; but the impression he gives you of his spokesmen is of two characteristics - cruelty and triviality.

In most of the great world religions, not only the Old Testament, God seems to have been peculiarly bloodthirsty and a lot of lives have been cut short in his name. They are, not a million miles from being, though as in other religious conflicts, God is probably a scapegoat, an excuse for various behaviour rather than a cause of it.

For most of us nowadays the problem is that he seems to be so small minded. It was always difficult to understand why a merciful God could

condemne predestination (a nasty shock at the end, in Muriel Spark's phrase) but increasingly I find it even more difficult to believe that an infinite and eternal and omniscient God, with an intelligence massive enough to comprehend the totality of nature and the behaviour of peoples should care a damn (which may be the right word) about trivial matters of discipline and the membership and observance of sectarian bodies! Whether they are matters of discipline or theology we have spent a lot of time creating problems for ourselves which we then spend a lifetime trying to solve or avoid or escape from.

But let me try to redress the balance. Nobody is more anticlerical than the clergy so I am in good company. For among them I have found some of the most heroic and inspiring people of my time - missionaries and leaders, apostles and saints. Perhaps their uncharitableness is simply the reverse of their great virtue, which is love. I have listened to some really great preachers in my time, from several denominations. Some have been unforgettable performers and speakers, some so clear of speech that it was difficult to follow their words. But all of them have taught the love of God and found it through the love of mankind. And love, I suspect, is after all what led to the incident at the start of this article.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

League table of civil engineering degrees

The Institution of Civil Engineers is concerned to see the nature of your survey of civil engineering degree courses (11/11/83). I suspect there is probably only one body with enough knowledge to attempt a fair degree of assessment in relation to the relative merits of the various departments of civil engineering. This is the Joint Board of Moderators, composed of eminent lecturers and academic members of three institutions of civil, structural and municipal engineers, and, however, would not complete the reasons for this is that the attributes of the degree courses are variable in their strengths, the institutions see positive advantages in encouraging a variety of courses to cater for the diverse needs both of students and of the profession.

We would suggest that academic opinion alone is not representative of what is best for the student and the profession. Furthermore, we note that your "league tables" are based on a mere 17 usable academic results. Taken separately, equally unhelpful, a selection of parents at local universities/polytechnics they would be proud to have their offspring or of employers from which universities/polytechnics they would

consider recruiting graduates. In both cases opinions would tend to be based on incomplete, inadequate, misleading or outdated information. The Institution of Civil Engineers does not consider that the "league tables" are representative of the views of the profession as a whole. Moreover it is only the Joint Board of Moderators of the Institutions of Civil, Structural and Municipal Engineers, with a fairly close knowledge of each individual department and degree course, which could be considered to be in any position to make such judgments and that, for very good reasons, it would never make these public.

Yours faithfully,
D. L. G. BEGBIE,
Director of education, training and membership,
The Institution of Civil Engineers,
Great George Street,
London SW1.

Historically, research agendas have always provided a reason for debate. However, we would defend most vigorously the need for such decisions to be made on academic rather than political grounds. In this light the peritill inquiry shoulders a heavy responsibility. More specifically, it concerns us that its deliberations and conclusions are likely to promote a new prescriptive view of "desirable" industrial relations research with implications, not only for the SSRC unit and British scholarship generally, but internationally as well.

We hope that reason will prevail. Yours faithfully,
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University of New South Wales.
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University of New South Wales.
BILL HOTCHKISS, senior lecturer,
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University of New South Wales.

Burnham teachers' panel

In his letter (THES, December 10, 1983) Mr. Jones states that the inclusion of the Association of Polytechnic Teachers in the list of teachers' panel members in the 1982 Burnham Further Education report means that all this "must" have been agreed by all those concerned in the discussions". The APT has not been admitted to the panel and neither the teachers nor the management panel in the so committee asked for them in the report. However, described in the report, such as the extraordinary workings of the document is the "property" of the Secretary of State for Education and he required the APT to be listed in this way despite the views expressed in the committee itself.

Yours faithfully,
SANDRA POSTATA,
Principal lecturer in charge of Italian,
Sheffield City Polytechnic.

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Heart valve research

Sir, - My attention has just been drawn to a letter in your issue of October 29 from a Mr P. J. Hill of the British Technology Group, concerning statements made in your article of October 8, ("Britain loses heart project to America") about the National Research Development Corporation's handling of an invention of mine. Mr Hill claims that the NRDC behaved correctly in every way throughout. The facts are otherwise.

Shortly after my invention of a new type of artificial heart valve in 1969, I proposed to the NRDC that it should enter into a revenue-sharing agreement with Edinburgh University, my employer, in consideration of which the corporation should secure such patent protection as would allow me to discuss the invention in the United States on a forthcoming visit there without compromising prospects for commercial exploitation.

The NRDC responded with enthusiasm, and secured patent cover very promptly. Not until long after I returned from the USA, however, did I discover that the corporation had applied for a UK patent myself. Good fortune alone prevented my disclosure of the invention in the USA and thereby forfeiting irrevocably any future rights for its manufacture or sale in that country.

After my return to Edinburgh, while still unaware that patent cover had been secured only in the UK, I interested a major German manufacturer in the invention. I reported this to the NRDC in a letter of May 1972 and was advised that it would be in order to enter into technical discussions with the German firm.

A year later the NRDC itself prepared to enter into business negotiations with the company concerning my valve. At that time no German or other overseas patent existed on the invention. In consequence, the NRDC's advice that I should discuss NRDC's details with a German manufacturer jeopardized the firm's negotiating position with the firm, and the NRDC's own preparations for negotiations were without point, as the corporation possessed no patent rights negotiable in Germany.

The true patent position was disclosed for the first time a year later by the NRDC, as, by chance, in a letter dated May 25, 1973, replying to a routine inquiry from my unit. This letter, four years after the initial application, had been made substantial changes had been made in the patent specification without in the consultation with me; that the NRDC had never sent me a copy of the complete specification as filed; and that it had at no time taken steps to pursue a patent application outside the UK.

By this time, the UK patent was to be published by the UK Patent Office. As such publication constitutes public disclosure, it would thereafter have been impossible to secure patent protection for the invention in Germany or any other foreign country.

The heart valve business is by its nature international; rights of manufacture and sale in the UK would have been published at that stage time for both research and commercial purposes. It would therefore have become impossible to protect in any effective commercial sense.

I persuaded the corporation to relieve the situation at the eleventh hour by extending the patent to include certain improvements and corporate certain applications, all by filing overseas applications, all

plight of Italian studies

Sir, - I am afraid one can only agree with the gloomy picture depicted by Professor Fahy (THES, December 16). The disappearance of Italian posts must be of great concern to us, as an indication of the drastic reduction of never-to-abundant resources for both research and teaching in the field of Italian studies. The result is a progressive depopulation and marginalization of these studies, with the country and younger ones leaving the field altogether.

This is, I am afraid, one of the aspects of the "anorexia" syndrome induced by policies currently pursued in the higher education sector. In however, I was rather puzzled to find Sheffield City Polytechnic mentioned in your article as at risk. I must confess I am not as much aware of this, if not in as much as any subject and course in polytechnics is being endangered by the "death by a thousand cuts" policy.

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Industrial relations unit

Sir, - In recent months it has been both depressing and disconcerting to read in your pages of the establishment of the peritill inquiry into allegations of "unfair bias" in work carried out by the Industrial Relations Research Unit of the Social Science Research Council at the University of Warwick.

In our estimation the stature and professional quality of work carried out in the unit ranks with, if not surpasses, that of virtually all other world centres of learning in the field. Its impact in generating new vitality and excitement in academic industrial relations circles over the past decade cannot be overestimated. Certainly, we in Australia have been benefited by the Warwick stimulus which has contributed significantly to the emergence of a more lively and robust interdisciplinary research climate.

Historically, research agendas have always provided a reason for debate. However, we would defend most vigorously the need for such decisions to be made on academic rather than political grounds. In this light the peritill inquiry shoulders a heavy responsibility. More specifically, it concerns us that its deliberations and conclusions are likely to promote a new prescriptive view of "desirable" industrial relations research with implications, not only for the SSRC unit and British scholarship generally, but internationally as well.

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Without being too complacent - there is always room for improvement - up to now I have been reasonably pleased with the support given to Italian studies at Sheffield City Polytechnic, where our BA (Hons) degree in modern languages with political studies has been operating.

Yours faithfully,
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Union View

Open the debate on alternatives

A paper recently before the National Advisory Body has as its heading "A strategy for local authority higher education in the late 1980s". This is education in the late 1980s. The paper which has received substantial publicity at least in the education press, for its recommendation that a new two-year diploma scheme should receive more detailed consideration, as an alternative to the present three-year degree course.

It must be of concern that the paper takes the form that it does. Firstly, it is important for the NAB to seriously develop a strategy for higher education in the public sector, based on a coherent educational philosophy and not merely a financial-led short-term planning exercise of the kind that it is currently undertaking. It is a pity that a paper which starts off with a good résumé of the models of higher education which have shaped the present system should degenerate into a series of limp and second-rate proposals for the future.

To deal however with the issues. The paper rightly draws attention to the fact that the so-called "Robbins" model has been bolderized over the years to a point where the three-year 18 plus degree course, and the satisfaction of individual demand, on this basis, came to be represented as fulfiling the Robbins principle. The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education has long argued that while the Robbins principle ought to form part of a developed strategy for higher education it is by no means one which is adequate to meet the needs of the 1980s.

One of the interesting features about the paper is that it assumes, implicitly at least, that higher education demand will either continue to rise or at least will not fall as Government planning policies have assumed. It notes that the Robbins model, with its focus on the 18 plus student, linked higher education demand firmly to demography. Such a demand is a sharp decline in the numbers entering higher education with the decline of the 18 plus age group. The assumption behind the present paper is that this decline will not occur, and therefore, if pressures on resources continue, there will be a permanent problem that is likely to continue well into the 1990s.

Unfortunately, the paper buries this assumption rather than highlights it. It does not invite the NAB to argue for increased resources even as one possible strategy amongst many others.

The rather flashy round-up of possible options for the future, with which the paper ends, are not new and all have been discussed in one form or another over the past four or five years. Whereas in the past however they were discussed as additional ways of developing higher education, they are now discussed as alternatives.

The paper calls for "an open debate about the strategies open to the sector and a detailed examination of the proposals outlined in this report". The NAB believes we need an open debate about the strategies open to the sector and a detailed examination of the proposals outlined in this report. The NAB believes we need an open debate about the strategies open to the sector and a detailed examination of the proposals outlined in this report.

The APT has not been admitted to the panel and neither the teachers nor the management panel in the so committee asked for them in the report. However, described in the report, such as the extraordinary workings of the document is the "property" of the Secretary of State for Education and he required the APT to be listed in this way despite the views expressed in the committee itself.

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